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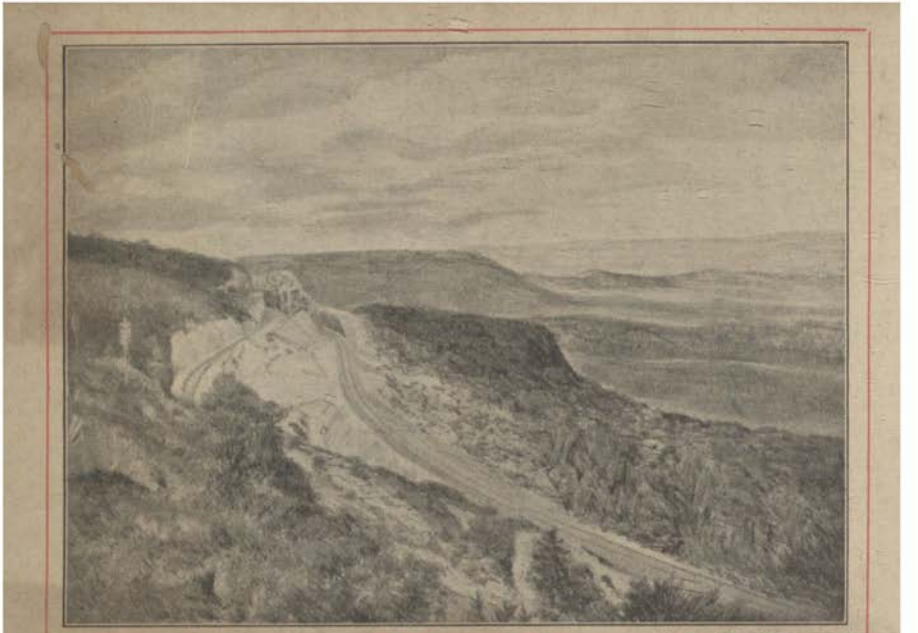
# AUSTRALASIA
# THE COMMONWEALTH AND NEW ZEALAND

By
ARTHUR W. JOSE



THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, N.S.W.

# AUSTRALASIA
## THE COMMONWEALTH AND NEW ZEALAND

BY ARTHUR W. JOSE

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# PREFACE

SINCE we Britons first discovered that the toil of nation-making was peculiarly suited to our tastes and powers, we have set ourselves many problems in colonization, working them out rather by mere instinctive doggedness in the right direction than by a close attention to rules or the guidance of theorizing philosophers. We took over botched jobs from France and from Holland, and have made of them dominions to stir the envy of a Roman emperor: we trained the Thirteen States, that are now the mightiest of republics, till they retorted upon us our own lessons: to the ancient civilizations, to yet more ancient savagedoms, of India our rule has brought peace and an orderly growth in which all the virtues of all her tribes are finding their fit use and value. And once we undertook a task unlike all these in its elements, full of natural difficulties, free of international complications. We chose a region that was scarcely more than the raw material of a country, as far removed from the homeland as it well could be: we peopled it for a beginning with men whom we were not disposed to retain in England: we made upon it all manner of experiments, and later on left it to its own devices with the expressed hope that we should soon part company altogether. Our reward is, that the Australian Commonwealth to-day is sturdily proud of its British blood, yet no less sturdy in the resolve to develop on its own lines

with its own brains the freedom which is the traditional heritage of our race. Its history is still to make; but childhood, too, has chronicles of its own that are worth study. As such a chronicle, interesting at least to the lovers of Imperial Britain and all her children, this little book hopes to be judged.

A. W. J.

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# AUSTRALASIA

## CHAPTER I

### *The Land and its Discoverers*

THE story of Australia is not an exciting one for the world at large. It contains no great triumphs of diplomacy, no great battles, no enduring struggles of race with race. To win Canada we turned Europe upside down. To win India we spent, and are spending, the best lives England has at her disposal. In South Africa we have imperilled, not once nor twice only, our reputation and our honour. Australia, as we are wont to view it, shows but a dull pattern against such gorgeous tapestry. Its history is as monotonous as its landscape. From the gaol-regulations that were its first laws to the legal technicalities that delayed the Commonwealth Act, it offers little that is stimulating to the average Briton's attention, however deep may be its interest to the social reformer and the student of constitutions.

So one thinks at first sight. But Australia is above all things the land of the unexpected. After six months' acquaintance you have summed it up quite satisfactorily in a few general propositions. Let the months turn to years, and you will hardly dare to make a single general statement about it—not because your generalities were untrue twice in a hundred times, but because the one exception was probably so all-important and so unforeseen. The paradoxes of its fauna and flora are long ago commonplace: paradox haunts equally its social and political life; but the greatest paradox of all is that most of the others are unreal, apparent only to

the superficial gaze, imagined rather than seen. In spite of Lindsay Gordon and Marcus Clarke its birds are not songless, nor its flowers without perfume; nor, when the right historian comes, will its annals lack the liveliest interest or fail to appeal to the widest and least specialist audience.

A primer, however, has little to do with work of thi kind. All that can be hoped for it is that it will set out the essential facts of Australian nature and history in a form clear enough to explain in some measure the qualities of Australian folk, and accurate enough to foreshadow the future of the new Commonwealth. How far this book falls short of such hopes none knows better than the writer.

* * * * *

***The Shape of the Land.***—Australia is a country of tablelands. It might almost be described as a single tableland, edged in part by a single range of hills, and dropping just behind the shelter of those hills to form a single riverine plain. The range runs parallel to its eastern coast, not far inland, getting higher as it goes southward, then disappearing under Bass Strait to rise again as Tasmania; it is really no more than the outer edge of the plateau, falling steeply towards the sea, by more gradual steps to merge in the inland plain. Low as it is (its highest point is little more than 7000 feet, and its average height below 3000) it makes the most of itself. Deep waterworn gorges nearly everywhere cut it into a maze of narrow cliff-sided ridges; there are few passes, in the European sense: to cross it, you must as a rule climb over the top. Nowhere else in the world have such low hills been so effectual a barrier to exploration and settlement.

Behind this eastern range lie plains drained (to use the cant phrase) by the Murray-Darling river system, continued north and north-west into the drier plains of the Cooper and Diamantina, and north again over a hardly discernible watershed to the "Gulf country," whose chief streams are the Flinders and the Mitchell. All this is the great pastureland, the most permanent source of Australian wealth:

the coal-areas are mainly coastal, the metals lie in the gullies of the main range and where its streams debouch into the plain. West of 135° the whole country rises again into almost unbroken tableland: this part is not yet fully explored, but has been enough crossed in different directions to show that it has no real river system. It is the oldest and yet the most unformed part of the Australian continent, a region where everything is "patchy," from the hillocks to the gold-deposits. Its coastal slope is on the north broad, terraced, and intersected with large but not very permanent rivers, the flat sea-edge being its poorest part: narrowing as it goes southwards, it rises into a range carrying valuable forests in the south-western corner, and along the Great Bight becomes a mere line of low, slightly wooded cliffs.

***Its Water Supply.***—"Thou hast given me a south land: give me also springs of water," runs the epigraph of an early work on Australia. Nothing could be more appropriate. Except in the "desert sandstone" country of the western tableland, the continent is fertile enough—chemically: its one need is a permanent and regularly distributed supply of water. Nature has done what she could to prevent this need from being ever satisfied. The hills are so low that there is no reservoir of perpetual snow on which the rivers can draw: they are so close to the eastern coast that the longer rivers run inland through soils too porous to hold their water. The main supply of moisture comes with the winds from the Indian Ocean, and has to travel across or round the hot West Australian plateau: often the atmospheric conditions of the interior are such as to thrust these rain-bearing currents southwards off the mainland altogether, and the longed for "depression" that is signalled from Albany is next heard of as "heavy rains in the Tasman Sea." North Australia and Queensland depend, under very similar circumstances, on the arrival of storm-centres from Malaysia. The east coast has its own supply, brought by winds of the Pacific swirling in from north or south—irregular, but so lavish when they arrive that coastal

riverlands are subject to devastating floods. Along the coast, however, and in the highlands, it is possible to conserve and more or less regulate the supply, which at least runs in surface-channels. But behind the main range conditions are different. The soil has not been consolidated, as in other parts of the world, by long and deep submergence beneath pre-historic seas; the surface-channels are mere gutters for storm-water connecting a row of less easily dried ponds; the real rivers sink further and further below ground as they run westwards, and are tapped in the plain-country by artesian wells 2000 feet deep.

***A Backwater.***—The whole continent, indeed, gives one the impression of a mass of admirable material only half-shaped for the use of man, then put aside and half-forgotten; the earliest made, the latest utilized, cut off during the ages between from the main currents of development in terrene affairs. In such isolation have grown up its unique flora and fauna—eucalyptus, marsupial, blackfellow—diverging into a remarkable variety of types, developing the most intricate differences in detail, but preserving all the while the low organization of their ancestry for lack of the competition of incoming higher forms. With nothing to exploit, everything needing to be used, Australia waited through ages of ignorance and centuries of neglect for the race that could use it.

***Early European Visits.***—It is strange that among all the discoveries of those adventurous men who followed in the tracks of Columbus and da Gama there should be no mention of Australia. The Portuguese at least, who by 1526 were in New Guinea, might have been expected to traverse the few leagues that still separated them from the continent. Perhaps they did; for they had good reason to conceal the fact, if it was a fact. After a good deal of negotiation they had settled with their rivals, the Spaniards, to divide new discoveries between the two nations, Portugal taking all that lay between longitudes 45° W. and 147 E., or thereabouts. But this division would give the

eastern coasts of Australia to Spain; and the Portuguese, therefore, if they knew those coasts, would assuredly say nothing about their knowledge. On the other hand, Portuguese navigators had a preference for hugging the shore as they penetrated into unknown waters, and possibly the dangerous coral-reefs that stud the coastal waters south and east of New Guinea deterred them from voyaging further in that direction.

***De Quir and Torres.***—Spain, however, desired greatly a footing in that part of the world, and her explorers came again and again westwards from Peru. Still, tropical lands were their chief goal, because of their wealth of spices, and every voyager kept well north of Australian latitudes. At last in 1606 Fernandez de Quir, a Portuguese in the Spanish service, lit upon a well-watered coast that seemed to him full of possibilities. "The earth is bounteous," he said; "they have no murderous fire-arms, they do not labour in silver-mines; there *must* be a great nation there"; and he called it *Austrialia of the Holy Ghost.* But there were dissensions in his fleet; and while he made back to Peru, his second-in-command, the Spaniard Torres, sailed round the new-found land (which was only a large island, one of the New Hebrides) and pushed westwards for New Guinea. There he got among coral reefs, and was puzzled; it seems certain from his journal that he saw the Australian coast, but must have taken it for another island; in the end he sailed through the straits that bear his name, thinking himself all the time in open ocean.

***The Dutch.***—In the same year, if we can believe a story none too well authenticated, these same straits were being approached from the opposite side. The Portuguese empire had in 1580 come under the control of Spain, which was about the same time engaged in a struggle with its Dutch subjects. Now the Portuguese colonies were held for the sake of trade, and Spain did not understand trading—Spanish colonies were valued for their mines of gold or silver, mainly: while the Dutch were born traders. To

the Dutch, therefore, fell the trading stations which Spain neglected, among them the islands of Malaysia, with Batavia in Java as the new headquarters: and from Batavia, the story goes, a little yacht, the *Duyfken*, was sent out exploring to the south-east. The reefs that fill Torres Strait appeared to the *Duyfken's* crew like a solid stretch of land and they pushed on down the west side of the Cape York peninsula till the water shallowed under their keel and forbade them to hope for an exit further south: then they turned back, and their report discouraged all further attempts to reach the Pacific in that direction.

So the east coast of Australia remained unknown. But Dutch ships now began to strike across the Indian Ocean from the Cape directly towards Batavia, and often found themselves (mainly because their maps gave the Indian Ocean too great a width) on the less inviting western coasts of the continent ("New Holland," as they called it), where they left sometimes their own names, sometimes those of their captains. *Eendracht Land*, *Nuyts Land*, *De Witt Land*, were writ large on maps for two hundred years: now there is but one name well-known, the *Leeuwin* cape whose storms are too often Australia's greeting and farewell to European travellers.

***Tasman.***—At last even the slow-going Dutch authorities were piqued into curiosity, and determined to find out more about this great southern neighbour of theirs. Accordingly one of their most experienced navigators, Abel Tasman, was sent off to see how far south the New Holland coast went, and what lay beyond it. Tasman struck southwards till his ship was in the belt of westerly breezes that sailors call the "roaring forties," and was carried straight on to shores which he called Van Diemen's Land (after the governor of Batavia who had sent him), but we Tasmania: frightened away from here by strange sights and sounds, he drove eastward again to a land full of warlike and fearless natives, who prevented him from landing at all. So he mapped the coast line roughly, called the land Staaten Land (which Dutch

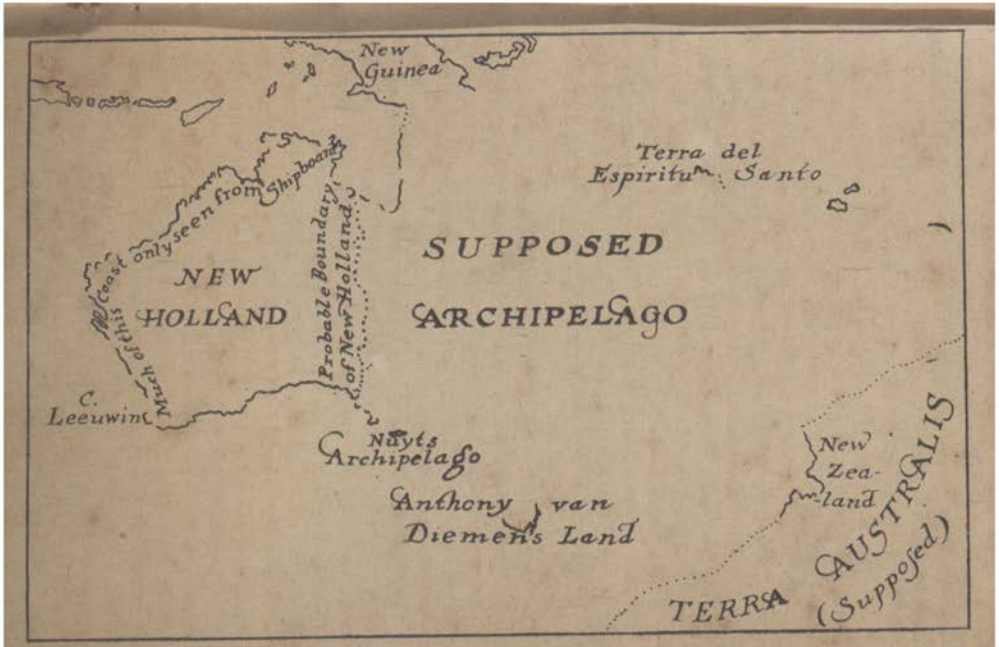
officials later altered to New Zealand), and made haste back to Batavia by the northern side of New Guinea. Two years later he was commissioned to make a thorough survey of the seas where the *Duyfken* had blundered ; but he made exactly the same mistake—for the details of Torres' voyage were not known to the world till 1806. So the Dutch were content to let things be: none of the southern lands seemed to offer much hope of trade, and all were barren and desolate beside their own rich Spice Islands.

***Dampier.***—The next visitor was of a different stamp. William Dampier was an Englishman of the half-heroic sort, ready to dare all manner of ventures, but lacking the quick genius to make full use of them. He had buccaneered in the Caribbean Sea and shared in a fruitless attack on the treasurehouses of Panama. When American waters became overdangerous for these pursuits, the band of which he was a member took their ship across the Pacific, and after a raid or two among the Dutch islands decided to investigate the possibilities of New Holland. They stayed there (possibly in the neighbourhood of Port Darwin) but a short time: still, Dampier, who was a keen and careful observer, found himself haunted by the mystery that lay behind those barren coasts, and longed to push his enquiries further. So in 1699 we find him in command of the *Roebuck*, an English king's ship lent him by the Lord High Admiral himself, bent on finding in New Holland a continental Malaysia, rich with all tropical drugs and spices. He landed in Shark's Bay on the west coast, and for a moment was hopeful; but his zeal had no *stamina*. His crew was "heartless enough to the voyage at best," he says; fresh water was scarce, the natives were hostile and loathsome, the coast was dangerously beset with shoals. His dream grew very faint; he solaced himself with buffalo-hunting in Timor and a cruise in the waters north of New Guinea—which he believed to be as much a part of *Terra Australis* as New Holland, and so within the scope of his expedition.

Then for seventy years the land was undisturbed by

discoverers. But speculation about it went on as usual, and gradually a vague shape formed itself out of chaos in the minds of geographers. It was so vague that they nowhere put it definitely into words: but from their allusion and hints and puzzling self-contradictions it can be reshaped here. The Dutch discoveries, from Arnhem Land by the west coast to Nuyts Archipelago, they conceived as bordering a great island, New Holland, bounded eastwardly by a water-channel whose northern entrance was the Gulf of Carpentaria, its southern the present Spencer Gulf. To the east of this channel nothing was known, but there were probably islands, some of which had been landed on by de Quir and by Tasman. Far east again rose the bulk of *Terra Australis*, the Great South Land, its western shores probably those which Tasman had skirted, its eastern possibly not far from Patagonia.

***Cook.***—In the quiet years which followed the turmoil of the Seven Years' War men began to turn their thoughts again to this mystery of the South Pacific. Three expeditions, under Byron, Wallis, and Carteret, rounded South America and pushed north-west into the tropics past group after group of luxuriant coral islands; but winds and currents and the delight of warm climates persuaded each in turn to go still further towards and past the equator, and Australian shores remained unvisited. At last Lieutenant James Cook, sent in charge of the *Endeavour* to convey a party of astronomers to Tahiti—where they could best observe a transit of Venus—was ordered to make search on his way back for the continent that might lie to southward. He searched the south in vain. He turned to find again the coasts that Tasman had seen, and in a few months had shown definitely that they were no continent, but parts of two islands. That question being settled, he made for Tasman's earlier discovery: but when close upon it a chance storm drove him northwards, and on April 19, 1770, he found himself in sight of the sandhills that edge what is now eastern Gippsland in Victoria. At that he altered his course to work




IDEAS OF NEW HOLLAND AND TERRA AUSTRALIS, 1700-1770.

round the new land on its northern side, and sailed day after day up a coast of steep cliffs and high wooded headlands, till the cliffs fell away inland and sandy shores opened into a broad shallow bay. Landing here, he spent a week in seeing what was to be seen of the new country and its inhabitants: but the natives were shy and the landscape deceptive—for he thought he had seen fine grassmeadows and rich soil for tilth where those who came later could discover nothing but swamp or rocky ground. From this bay—which he at first called Stingray, but later Botany Bay—he coasted the new lands northwards to Cape York, barely escaping wreck on the coral reefs of the Great Barrier: rounding the Cape, and finding himself in waters already charted by the Dutch, he knew at last the extent of his discovery and formally claimed it for England by the name of New South Wales.

Cook was not unduly excited about this continent of his finding, but rather apologized for the small results of his voyage. After all, this was only more of New Holland—it was not the *Terra Australis Incognita*, the Great South Land that he had been commissioned to discover. So when he was sent out again, it was not to Australia but to the still unknown parts of the South Pacific that he made his way, spending a full two years in proving their emptiness of land: while his third voyage was devoted to work in northern Pacific waters, and in them at Hawaii he found his death. He was a great seaman, but he was a seaman: lands were to him chiefly a boundary of the ocean, which must be settled and marked down accurately to make the mariner free of his seas.

***Joseph Banks.***—But the *Endeavour* carried to the Pacific another great man. Joseph Banks was a young man of means, whose hobby was natural science with a blend of adventure: he had obtained leave to join Cook, taking with him at his own expense the expert botanist Solander and four artists (indeed, to the scientists of the time the voyage was known not so much by Cook's name as by those of Banks and Solander). He was the naturalist and the ethnologist

of the party, always alert for new life or new customs. And New South Wales took hold of him. His first impressions were not very favourable, but the more he thought about the country the more he believed in its future. He, as will be seen, first turned the thoughts of British Ministers towards settling it: his influence aided the choice of its governors, the survey of its coasts, the enterprise of its first farmers and sheep-owners. For fifty years after his first sight of it he was its unwearied and invaluable friend; so that one is tempted to wonder—seeing how near the infant colony was, in spite of all, to ruin and abandonment—whether it is not his work alone that Australia flies from end to end the British flag.

# CHAPTER II

## *What we made of it*

### *A.*—THE GAOL

*Governors*

Captain Arthur Phillip, R.N., 1788-1792.
Major Francis Grose (*Acting*), 1792-1794.
Captain William Paterson (*Acting*), 1794-1795.
Captain John Hunter, R.N., 1795-1800.
Captain Philip King, R.N., 1800-1806.
Captain William Bligh, R.N., 1806-1808
Colonel George Johnston
Colonel Joseph Foveaux
Colonel William Paterson
} irregularly Acting during mutiny.

### *B.*—THE REFORMATORY

*Governor*

Major-General Lachlan Macquarie, 1810-1821.

## A.—*The Gaol*

It is only by degrees that Englishmen have acquired the knack of colonization. Home-loving they have always been: they were home-keeping, too—as loth as the Frenchman of to-day to settle outside their own country—till long after the days even of Elizabeth. Hakluyt, a noteworthy pioneer of Imperialism, advocated the use of "our superfluous people" as colonists, and Frobisher gave the phrase explanation when he obtained permission to take criminals from the gaols for garrisoning his discoveries. The custom of "transportation," thus introduced to supply the need of labour in new countries, was found during our Civil Wars to be a convenient way of removing political prisoners from

the land where their presence was inconvenient. Charles I. set the example, which Cromwell soon bettered: after the Restoration the practice was confirmed and organized by Parliament, so that within a century it had become the recognised way of disposing of at least a thousand convicted prisoners each year. America—the thirteen colonies and the West Indian islands—had received this stream of criminals: when the war of the American Revolution blocked that channel, the stream naturally began to flood and to overflow the English prisons. Transportation, that had been a concession to the needs of young colonies, became an immediate necessity for the relief of the mother-country.

***Matra's plan.***—Joseph Banks, intent on securing for England the new land he had helped to explore, gave eager evidence in its favour before a committee of the House of Commons that sat in 1779 to decide on a future home for convicts. Just then the war came to its crisis, and home affairs were shelved. Four years later, however, another of the *Endeavour's* crew, James Matra, proposed to colonize New Holland with an aristocracy of loyal refugees from the United States and a labouring population of Kanakas and Chinese; and Banks' suggestion was again considered. Matra claimed for his settlement effective British protection from other European powers: the Ministry agreed, naming the admission of convicts as price of it. But four years more of parleying disgusted all those on whom Matra depended to form the free nucleus of his colony; so it came about that on Australia, for the first time in our history, we tried the experiment of convict-settlement pure and simple.

***The founding.***—The history of the Australian State begins on February 7, 1788, when Arthur Phillip, its first Governor, formally called into existence the colony of New South Wales. It was large enough in all conscience; its western boundary (135° E. long.) seems, though it included the Gulf of Carpentaria, to have been designed to exclude coasts on which the Dutch had prior rights by discovery; its

eastern limit was vague, including islands "adjacent to" the east coast—an expression which one governor interpreted as including Tahiti, while others excluded New Zealand and even Tasmania. About one little island there seems to have been no dispute; Norfolk Island was occupied immediately, and very nearly became the headquarters of the new colony.

For New South Wales, though it measured on the map 34° by at least 35°, was at the first for all practical purposes a block of none too fertile and quite untilled land less than twenty miles square; and on it a thousand men, most of them determined to do as little work as possible, had to find food. Phillip had brought with him sheep and cattle: all the sheep died but one, and the cattle were lost in the bush. The "grass meadows" of Botany Bay could not be found—they did not exist; the bay itself was unfit for a permanent harbour, and its swampy shores for a settlement. Phillip had been lucky enough to find, only a few miles further north, one of the finest harbours in the world, and on it, in a cove where his ships could anchor in deep water close to shore, had founded his capital, the townlet of Sydney. But Sydney was as rocky as Botany Bay was swampy: Phillip took boat to the head of the long harbour, discovered good agricultural land at Parramatta, fourteen miles off, and discovered also that there was not a farmer among his subjects, or anyone but his own butler who knew anything about farming. Storeships were wrecked on the way out; ships that arrived safely brought more convicts, and in worse condition. The first fleet had brought seven hundred and fifty or so, fairly well looked after, because Phillip himself was in charge; the second left England with a thousand, lost two hundred and seventy on the way, and landed two-thirds of the survivors unfit for work; the third, with some trouble, reduced this proportion by one-half. Between failing stores and poor farming, the discontent of his subordinates and the sullen antipathy of the ever-increasing convict-population, Phillip had work to do that few men could have mastered:

the mere continued existence of New South Wales bears monumental witness to the ability of its first Governor.

***Problems of government.***—There is no need to separate very distinctly the history of his governorship from that of his immediate successors. For twenty years the place was a gaol under nominally autocratic rule: each ruler faced almost the same problems and took much the same way of failing to solve them. Famine, rioting among the convicts, insubordination among their guards—these were the dangers: and though the first two were grappled with successfully, the third could not be mastered except by abandoning the gaol-theory of government altogether.

Against famine there was an obvious remedy—to explore the country for better land and import better farmers for its tilling. Phillip struck into the bush westwards, and thirty miles or so away came upon a fine river flowing north, with rich soil on its banks and up some of its tributary valleys. It came out of rocky forest-land on the south, it passed into rocky forest-land on the north; beyond its western bank rose a barrier of barren hills cut into (but not through, seemingly) by gorges that ended everywhere in cliffs a thousand feet high. Here were the gaol walls—a clear provision of Nature: and though attempts were made now and then to find a way across the barrier, none of the early governors were very anxious for the finding. After all, discipline was no less necessary than food; and it was quite hard enough to maintain discipline as far away as the scattered Hawkesbury farms, whose occupants soon found it more profitable to make spirits of their grain than to sell it as flour. So the Hawkesbury valley remained till 1812 on the border of settlement; though Banks obtained the offer of Mungo Park's services as an explorer, Governor King refused it: and a tract of land beyond the Nepean, where Phillip's lost cattle had been found in 1794, was reserved strictly for the herd's pasturage.

Exploration, therefore, did little to provide against famine. The Hawkesbury farms were productive enough—except when

floods came, a not infrequent occurrence—but their produce was chiefly turned into rum: Norfolk Island, after one or two severe experiences, provided food for itself and some for export to the mainland: but as late as 1807 there were still periods of great scarcity when Capetown had to come to the rescue with flour and China with rice.

As for the second remedy—the importing of men who could make better use of the land—that was in the hands of the Government at home, and they were in no mind to waste thought upon far-off Australia. Colonies, and this one above all, were depôts for the reception of people whom it was undesirable to keep in England: why should they be provided with intelligent farmers, the very men England had most need of? Speculators, ne'erdoweels, "experts" who knew nothing of their business, Australia was very welcome to. Governor King notes the discharge of an "expert" millwright who had cost the public more than £600 before he was got rid of for uselessness, and whose work was eventually done for £25 by "an ingenious Irish convict."

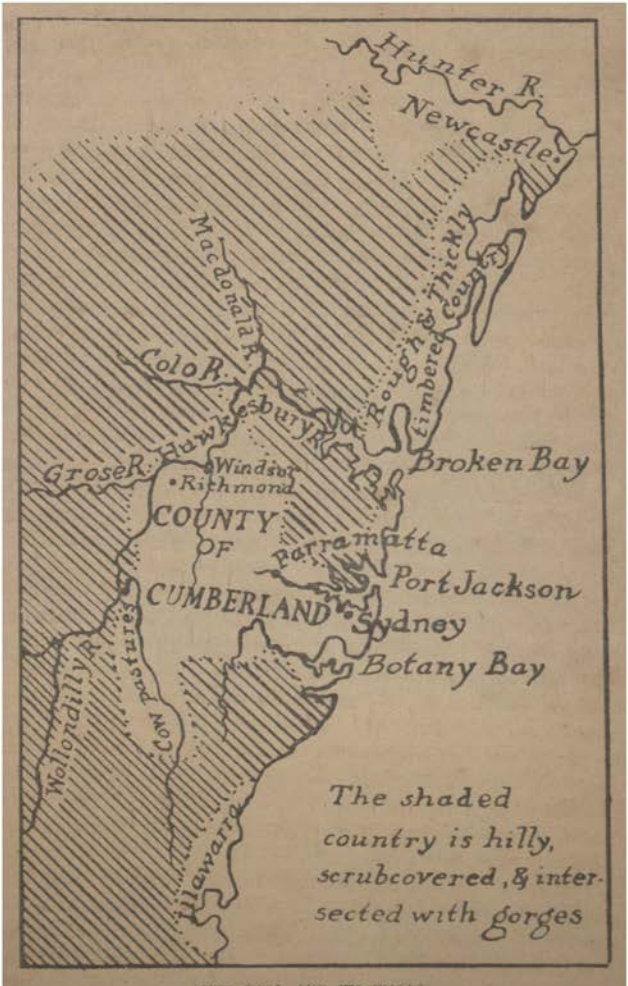
***Convict discipline.***—In a community where practically every man was either criminal or warder, strict discipline was naturally of pre-eminent importance. Yet it was almost impossible to attain. This came about mainly from the character of the warder class, of whom more will be said further on. But much difficulty also arose from the medley of serious and trivial offences for which transportation was the penalty, more especially when to the mixture of felons and petty thieves and poachers were added such political offenders as the "Scotch Martyrs" of 1793 and the Irish rebels of 1798. The Irish especially were indefatigable conspirators, and after keeping the colony in a ferment for several years at last, in 1804, broke into open riot: but the movement, once disclosed, was quickly crushed.

Here again exploration was looked to for a remedy, but exploration of a different kind. Evidently it was advisable with such a mixed multitude of prisoners to separate the classes as much as possible; more little gaols were needed, more coast

settlements with handy bush-barriers on their inland side, accessible only by sea. Wherefore along the coast discoveries were welcomed and explorers encouraged by Governor after Governor—being, indeed, fellow-seamen themselves, all of them, and appointed to the post because of the well-known strictness of naval discipline. Phillip was a post-captain, Hunter his second-in-command on the first fleet, King one of his lieutenants; as for Bligh, he owed his appointment as much to those martinet habits which had provoked the men of the *Bounty* to mutiny as to the splendid bravery and skill which had rescued him from the vengeance of the mutineers.

***Bass and Flinders.***—The real beginning, therefore, of Australian exploration is the work of Bass and Flinders, surgeon and midshipman of the ship that brought Hunter out to be Governor. In 1796 they took a cockleshell of a boat forty miles down the coast from Sydney to the gardenland of Illawarra, then and for many years after cut off from the main settlement by a ring of almost impassable cliffs. In 1797 Bass (Flinders being away on duty) took a whaleboat into the unknown parts that lay between Tasman's discoveries of 1642 and Cook's first-seen sandhills, and got so far in behind the Tasman coast (he reached Western Port) as to convince him that it was no part of the mainland. The next year Flinders joined him again, and the two friends made sure of their belief: they circled Tasmania completely, and noted how in north and south alike a river-estuary gave easy access to the fertile inland districts. The news was very welcome to King, who was badly in need of some isolated depôt for his Irish political prisoners. He occupied the Derwent in 1803 and the Tamar in 1804, and hoped to make the island a new granary for the support of the mother colony.

Of Bass one hears no more. Flinders had another four years of work, during which he mapped with great care the whole coast line from Cape Leeuwin in the south-west to the bottom of the Gulf of Carpentaria. But on his way home to England he was seized and imprisoned by the French




THE GAOL AND ITS WALLS.

governor of the Mauritius, and his maps were taken to France to be published there with French names as the work of French explorers.

***The French in Australasia.***—For we had not been quite left to ourselves in the South Seas. Ever since we drove the French from Canada, their sailors had been on the look-out for new territory in regions still uncharted. Cook had been preceded in the Pacific by de Bougainville, and was followed closely by du Fresne. La Pérouse met Phillip in Botany Bay; d'Entrecasteaux four years after haunted the southern shores of Tasmania; and Flinders early in 1802 met in Encounter Bay a well-equipped French expedition under Baudin, that had taken up Bass's work along the mainland where he dropped it at Western Port, and had dreams of gallicising those southern districts by the name of Terre Napoléon. Indeed, it was almost as much from fear of French annexation as from need of new penal stations that King so hastily occupied Tasmania: and similar fears in later days had much to do with our occupation of Northern and Western Australia, not to say New Zealand.

***The New South Wales Corps.***—King could transfer his recalcitrant convicts to the safer isolation of Tasmania: but an enemy far more dangerous to the colony's peace remained at his doors. In truth, though he was called Governor, and had authority over convicts, it was not really he who governed the community. That was the privilege of the New South Wales Corps.

Phillip's prison-guard was composed of marines, a body of men too valuable to be spared from Europe in times dangerously near war. The British Government, therefore, accepted the offer of Major Grose—not an unusual one a century ago—to raise a corps whose special and permanent duty should be to keep order in New South Wales. The offer was not unusual, but the circumstances were. Men enter the army, as a rule, with some hope of fighting, some ambition to serve their country in war: and those who have other motives do not include among them the expectation of making money out

of their service. But this corps was to have no fighting, no chance of distinction: its work was gaolers' work, inglorious, full of petty annoyances, at the other end of the world. The officers who joined did so as a commercial speculation—Australia, they knew, was in the Eastern seas, and thence was the rise of many sudden fortunes: the men were the lowest of the low, those whom no real regiment would admit into its ranks. So formed, the New South Wales Corps became, from the moment of its arrival in the colony, a thorn in the side of every Governor—except when its own officers acted as such between regular appointments. And, as ill-luck would have it, there was a long *interregnum* immediately after Phillip's departure during which the Corps took such hold on affairs that no succeeding Governor was able to master it and rule in his own way.

The key to its conduct is from beginning to end its commercialism. The officers soon found that Australia was no India, full of wealth that any reasonably clever European might hope to have his share of: so they made the best of it by getting what profit they could out of business pursuits. Some took up land and worked it with the pick of the convict labour: these at least helped not only themselves but the colony towards prosperity. For the most part, being the only colonists with ready cash, they traded: they bought up the cargoes of vessels as they arrived in harbour, and resold the goods at enormous profit: they imported on their own account the "rum" (a generic name for spirits of any kind) which was the convicts' great luxury; they taught the Hawkesbury farmers how much distilling increased the value of their crops. On the rum industry centred all the fights between Governor and Corps. Hunter forbade officers to sell liquor; King licensed ex-convicts to the trade, partly to break the monopoly, partly to shame the offenders out of it. Neither Governor was obeyed: on the contrary, the officers had friends in England so powerful that in the end Hunter was recalled and King forced into resignation. As for Bligh, who came out armed with all the authority the

British Government could give him to put down this defiant unruliness, the story of his Governorship is the most dramatic episode of Australian history.

***John Macarthur.***—Lieutenant John Macarthur, one of the first batch of officers, was a man of original ideas, strong *esprit de corps*, and great cantankerousness. He was among the first of the military landholders, and began at once to make experiments in farming, till he convinced himself that sheep-raising beyond all other pursuits was the colony's real business. But the sheep to hand were a poor selection, stunted and goatish in the wool: Macarthur introduced the merino, a jealously-preserved Spanish breed with very fine wool, which was found in small numbers among the flocks of the Cape Boers; while his friend and co-experimenter, Samuel Marsden, was given sheep of the same breed from George III.'s own flock. But this new industry required room, and in the tiny gaol-colony there was none. Macarthur, therefore, having secured from England a grant of five thousand acres, proposed to select his new farm beyond the Nepean, in the Camden district, long since reserved for the Government herd of cattle.

Now while Macarthur himself had been doing legitimate work for the common good, his former comrades (for he resigned his commission in 1804) were less usefully employed. None the less his sympathies were with his old Corps; he was always ready to believe the Governor in the wrong, and to back his belief with the strength of his temper. So, being for his good work a man of influence in England, he made himself unnecessarily prominent in the disputes with Hunter and King, and when Bligh came out was looked upon as the real leader of all the insubordination. Against him, therefore, Bligh's anger burned hottest: their first meeting was a stormy challenge. "What have I to do with your sheep, sir?" the Governor burst out. "Are you to have such flocks of sheep and herds of cattle as no man ever heard of before? No, sir!" and there followed a threat that the Camden grant would be annulled. From that

moment the two were open enemies, and Macarthur identified himself with the Corps whose ascendancy Bligh was determined to destroy.

***The Bligh Mutiny.***—His enterprise was not confined to wool-growing. Grape culture was another of his hobbies, and an English friend sent him out a still for the purpose of experimenting in colonial brandy. Here, thought Bligh, was clear proof of his enemy's sharing in the prohibited rum traffic. The still was seized; Macarthur was arrested on a minor charge, and put on his trial before a Court presided over by a personal foe of more than ten years' standing. He appealed to the Corps: the officers rallied round him, and Major Johnston, the commandant, was persuaded to demand Bligh's resignation. Bligh called together the civilian magistrates, but the situation was already lost. The soldiers marched from barracks to surround Government House, turning even their artillery against it: an entrance was forced, and Bligh, with all his civilian officials, was taken prisoner. The next day he was formally deposed, new officials appointed, Macarthur triumphantly acquitted: Johnston became Acting-Governor, Bligh was interned on a ship in the harbour, and the Corps ruled undisturbed for nearly two years.

## B.—*The Reformatory*

The home authorities had stood a good deal—for indeed most of their attention was devoted to European affairs and Napoleon's determined attack on our commerce—but this time the Corps had gone too far. Macarthur and Johnston were summoned home and punished. The mutinous regiment was recalled, and after a few years disbanded. The colony was put on a new footing, and became one among the many garrison-stations of the Empire, through which regiments passed in regular order. The new Governor, Colonel Lachlan Macquarie, brought his own regiment with him, so that the new régime should be loyally supported from the beginning.

It was not only in military matters that Macquarie made a fresh start. His whole conception of the colony's future differed widely from that of his near predecessors. Their thoughts were with the convicts and their need of discipline: his with the emancipists (the ex-convicts who had gained freedom) and their hopes of reclamation. This was the high ideal of transportation (for the system had its ideals, just as at first negro slavery had), and Macquarie was determined that it should have its chance—that, to use his own words, "when once a man is free his former state should no longer be remembered or allowed to act against him; let him then feel himself eligible for any situation which he has by a long term of upright conduct proved himself worthy of filling." He must, then, have land to settle on, and public offices open for his holding: once freed, there must be no sense of taint about his life, no recalling of his past to be a clog on his career. This was the guiding principle of Macquarie's policy, and the goal towards which he moved persistently through eleven stormy years.

***Exploration inland.*** — Naturally it altered entirely the official attitude towards inland explorations. The Blue Mountains were again attacked: the Governor himself accompanied a preliminary expedition, and helped Gregory Blaxland, a comrade on that journey, to organise the one which was at last successful. The secret was a simple one: avoiding the gorges which had baffled his predecessors, Blaxland led a party of six up a spur and along the main ridge of the hills, cutting his way for sixteen days through thick brush, till from Mount York they clambered down into open meadowland, well watered, and assured themselves there was enough of it to pasture the colony's stock for the next thirty years. Hastening back, they told Macquarie the good news: he sent off a Government surveyor, George Evans, to follow up their discovery: and by the end of 1813 the main range had been crossed, the western slope traversed to a point nearly two hundred miles from the coast, and a wide region of open plains and

fertile river valleys added to the scanty domain that had so long been the whole of New South Wales. Blaxland's track was hastily shaped into a high-road, and in 1815 the Governor founded the first inland township, Bathurst, placing it on a river that took his own surname, and giving his first name to another river that Evans had found some distance to the south-west.

Nor did Macquarie's zeal rest here. The two rivers flowed steadily west: he was determined to know where they went. In 1817 he sent John Oxley, the Surveyor-General, to see. Oxley tracked the Lachlan into impassable swamps—for it was in the middle of a set of wet seasons: next year he tried the Macquarie, with the same result, and turned eastwards to reach the coast at an inlet he called Port Macquarie, crossing on his way fine grassland that he named the Liverpool Plains. Southwards, too, there were discoveries, mostly connected with the name of Hamilton Hume: and the sum total was this, that Macquarie found the colony measuring fifty miles by forty, and left it measuring three hundred miles by four hundred.

***The Emancipists.***—Such an expansion gave him room: his next care was to utilize it. He inaugurated an era of public works: roads and bridges, so that every settler had easy and secure access to his market; a lighthouse at the harbour-mouth; a scheme to minimise the damage done by the periodical Hawkesbury floods; schools and churches and asylums, the apparatus of civil life. The freedman, taking up his citizenship in this new land, should at least have a country he could be proud of. And, if Macquarie's friendship and encouragement were of any avail, the country should be proud of him. The professions were thrown open to him; he could become a lawyer, a magistrate: his present deserts alone, not his past offences, were to decide his fortune.

So Macquarie dreamed. But he had to reckon with the men who had thwarted all the Governors before him. The New South Wales Corps was disbanded, but its ex-officers were still at the head of local society, still the richest and

most influential colonists; and they declared open war on the emancipists, enlisting on their side every free new-comer from England. Macarthur was in England, but Marsden was an efficient substitute, refusing to sit as magistrate with emancipist colleagues, and stirring up strife with them at every opportunity. When a Supreme Court was founded, and judges imported from home, Bent, the first, refused to hear emancipist lawyers; Barron Field, the second, thought it a sufficient answer in case of debt that the creditor was an ex-convict. Poor man, he was still sore with the facile sarcasms of his friend Charles Lamb; some jests are cheap enough to the maker, but the victim pays dearly for them.

The agitation grew: there was plenty of trivial matter on which complaints could be based. Macquarie was a vain man, and inclined to be headstrong. Knowing that his ideals were high and his work in the main good, he was apt to show contempt and even hatred for those who wilfully hindered him—good foundation for charges of partiality. In a colony still dependent on subsidies from England he was spending money freely on works beyond its immediate need—clear evidence of pompous extravagance. In 1818 came out a Commissioner authorized to make full enquiry into the whole affair; and his report, condemning the extravagance, admitting the partiality, misunderstanding the emancipist policy, made Macquarie's recall inevitable.

# CHAPTER III

## *What we made of it*

### C.—THE PLANTATION

*Governors*

Major-General Thomas Brisbane, 1821-1825.
Lieutenant-General Ralph Darling, 1825-1831.
Major-General Richard Bourke, 1831-1837.
Sir George Gipps, 1838-1846.

*Lieutenant-Governors (Tasmania)*

Colonel Thomas Davey, R.M., 1813-1817.
Colonel William Sorell, 1817-1824.
Colonel George Arthur, 1824-1836.
Sir John Franklin, 1837-1843.

*Superintendent (Port Phillip)*

Joseph Latrobe, 1839-1851

***Free Settlers.***—Commissioner Bigge's report was the foundation of a series of reforms by which the colony became a new thing altogether. Neither the convict nor the ex-convict was to be its *raison d'être.* It was to be transformed into a South Pacific Virginia, the home of free men learning to govern themselves, for whose service English prisoners should be sent out to work for their bare sustenance until their term of punishment was ended. This change, impossible at any earlier date, became possible now, partly because the explorations of Hume and Oxley had opened up new districts for settlement, partly because the population of Britain was increasing by leaps and bounds in the years of the long peace, and free settlers of the right class could there-

fore be spared more easily. The downs of the high table-land round Bathurst and Goulburn, the upper valleys of the Nepean and Hunter, were divided among these immigrants either for cash payments or in proportion to the number of convict servants they undertook to maintain: and thus arose the distinction, soon enforced by law, between the colony as a whole and the "Nineteen[1] Counties" within which alone land might be selected for farming.

***The Constitution of 1823.***—The colony thus remodelled obtained at the same time a new form of government. Bligh and his predecessors had been nominally as much autocrats in New South Wales as they would have been on a man-of-war. Macquarie's autocracy was slightly tempered by the creation of an independent Supreme Court of Justice, whose single judge administered a sort of equity and was not very ready to accept Governor-made laws. But his successor, Sir Thomas Brisbane, was hedged in by a more complex system of Courts, with a Chief Justice at its head, and a modified form of trial by jury; he was also given an advisory Council of seven members appointed on his nomination, who, though they could neither make laws nor veto those he chose to make, were at least allowed to record their opinions freely for the benefit of the Colonial Office at home. Moreover—and this was a very practical check—he could lay no law before his Council until the Chief Justice had certified that it was consistent with English law as far as might be in such a colony. Brisbane, no stickler for his own authority, as far as possible left constitutional matters in the hands of his permanent officials, interesting himself in exploration and settlement and his scientific hobbies. But he aided the movement towards self-government by cancelling the censorship with which his predecessors had controlled the newspaper press.

***The "Emancipist" Party.***—The permanent officials were "exclusive" to the backbone, so that the emancipist

[1] "Twenty Counties" later on, by the addition of the Port Macquarie district.

population found itself deprived of nearly all the privileges granted by Macquarie. Brisbane's successor, General Ralph Darling, was their active enemy, and for an earnest of his intentions proceeded to dismiss every ex-convict who had found his way into the Public Service. But a few years of steady immigration had brought a new force into Sydney politics. The "emancipist" party filled its ranks every day with the new settlers: the "exclusives," while trying to keep up the old invidious distinction for the effect it always produced in London, became more and more a clique of official oligarchs. And Brisbane's freeing of the press gave the growing democracy its weapon. William Charles Wentworth, who had gone with Blaxland across the Blue Mountains, and in 1819, while a Cambridge undergraduate, had written an account of the colony that was strongly pro-Macquarie, now came to the front as part proprietor and editor of *The Australian*. Through this newspaper he advocated in season and out of season Trial by Jury—the full British privilege, not the modified form then allowed to the colony—and Taxation by elected Representatives; and Darling, a martinet who took his governorship very seriously indeed, found himself the victim of repeated attacks, mostly personal and often unjustifiable. He tried to re-establish press censorship by law: but the Chief Justice refused to certify to the constitutionality of his proposals. He took refuge in libel-actions, and won several: the chief result was to make the cry for genuine Trial by Jury irresistible. His enemies carried the war to England, and attacked him in the House of Commons; the Ministry defended him whole-heartedly, but it was evident that his rule was doing the colony harm, and in 1831 he was recalled. It is fair to add that in 1835 a Select Committee refused to endorse the definite charges of maladministration that had been brought against him.

***Sir Richard Bourke.***—His successor, Sir Richard Bourke, was chosen in a happy moment. No constitutional reform, except the actual concession of Trial by Jury, dates

from his governorship; but the ending of the old assignment system[1] marks an epoch in convict management second in importance only to the ending of transportation itself—and for that, too, it was Bourke's policy that made the way clear. Moreover, he was of so frank and kindly a disposition that the bitterest opponents were attracted, in his presence, to him and to each other; so able and so tactful, that the "exclusives" hardly resented their loss of power and the "emancipists" ungrudgingly abandoned their animosities for more conciliatory forms of agitation. Their cause, indeed, was by him assured of success. It had been hampered partly by the small numbers of non-capitalist immigrants (for the capitalists, sincerely as they might wish for reform, were socially enwebbed with the "exclusives"), partly by the stigma which attached to a settlement still the receptacle of convicts. Bourke's suggestion brought about the system of assisted immigration: to Bourke's constant advocacy it was largely due that in the early years of his successor's administration transportation to the mainland of Eastern Australia was done away with for ever.

***Sir George Gipps.***—That successor, Sir George Gipps, trod closely in the steps of Bourke, so that it is not easy to divide between the two men the credit of many measures that became law in those early years of Gipps' rule (measures, mainly, that will be discussed later on in this book—the abolition of the "assigned-servant" system, the institution of squatting licenses, and so forth). But Gipps, an abler man than Bourke, found himself in a far more difficult position. The mere fact that he succeeded a popular, not an unpopular, Governor was a great handicap. Moreover, the question of self-government for the colony was being hotly argued; the British Ministry was willing to grant it on conditions conceived in London, while Wentworth and his friends naturally believed themselves better able to formulate conditions locally. The Governor, as a British official, had to represent in Sydney the London

[1] See ch. x.

view, though he personally sympathized a good deal with the angry colonists. In despatches to London, on the other hand, he strongly opposed many of the pet measures that *doctrinaire* politicians would persist in thrusting on Australia, and in no way enhanced his popularity thereby; yet—to his and their credit be it said—Minister after Minister at home came to recognise his wisdom, left many things to his discretion, and sometimes even altered their own policy to meet his views. It happened, unfortunately, that New Zealand land-questions became pressing in Gipps' time, and his strict sense of honour brought him into collision with Wentworth over a land claim somewhat too comprehensive and unsubstantiated. Wentworth never forgave the Governor; his crusade on behalf of self-government became an unceasing (one might almost say unscrupulous) personal attack on the man who had thwarted him.

***The Constitution of 1842.***—Yet Gipps was largely instrumental in giving to Wentworth's party the desire of their heart. Brisbane's advisory Council of seven—four officials, three settlers—was enlarged in 1828 to fourteen (seven officials, seven settlers), but appointment to it was still made by the Minister in London on the Governor's recommendation. Its powers, however, were much increased; it controlled the Customs revenue, the Governor could make no laws without its consent, and if the judges (no longer the Chief Justice only) objected to its laws, they still held good until the final decision was received from London. In 1842 this compromise was abandoned in favour of one that introduced the long-wished for principle of elected representatives. Thirty-six members formed the new Council: twelve of them were still nominees (officials and settlers, six of each), but the other twenty-four were elected by the £200 freeholders and £20 householders of the colony. Full legislative powers—within the limits of the British Constitution—and complete control of all colonial revenues except the Land Fund and a fixed civil list of about £80,000, made this Council such a power in the land that

Gipps' earlier troubles were multiplied tenfold; for he was still the actual as well as the nominal head of the administration, still appointed and directed the colonial Ministry, and so drew on himself not only the attacks to which he was already accustomed but exaggerated blame for every error in Department or debate that might be committed by his subordinates.

Still, he was strong enough to stand it. And it was high time that the colonists should get some training in the use of political machinery. For at home Ministries were inclining more and more to *laissez aller* theories of Empire, as to *laissez faire* theories of commerce; and it was evident that in a very few years any British colony that chose to ask would find itself absolutely free, as Britons count freedom.

***Explorations, 1823-36.***—The colony which thus acquired considerable powers of self-government had won these not only by the eloquence of its politicians but still more by the enterprise of its settlers. Not Wentworth only, but Cunningham and Sturt and Mitchell, were the founders of its freedom. For while Macquarie's social policy had been at first abandoned and then much modified by his successors, each of them imitated and in the end outvied his zeal for exploration.

***Oxley, 1823: Cunningham, 1823-8.***—Along the coast discovery was still a by-product of the convict system. Commissioner Bigge had insisted on the classification of convicts according to their criminality, and to do this properly certain settlements, Port Macquarie among them, were set apart to receive the less reclaimable prisoners. To use Port Macquarie for such a purpose, thought Brisbane, was like making Kew Gardens into a gaol, and Oxley was despatched northwards along the coast to find a substitute. Cook and Flinders had both landed in Moreton Bay, but at its northern end, where it is not specially attractive: Oxley therefore passed by it on his way north. Coming back unsuccessful, he put in to Flinders' landing-place, and was unexpectedly hailed by a mob of blacks with a white man in their midst. From this man—Pamphlett, a castaway—the

surveyor learnt of a large river coming into the bay further south, and immediately explored it to such good purpose that within a year the "Moreton Bay Settlement" on the Brisbane River was formally inaugurated. So began the colonising of what is now Queensland; but free men also had a share in its origin. For the sheep-farmers of the Sydney side, already requiring wider pastures for their fast-multiplying flocks, hankered after those Liverpool Plains that Oxley had crossed in 1818: and in 1823 Allan Cunningham found a nearer pass through the tangled ranges, Pandora's Pass, witnessing by its name the extremity of hope to which he had been reduced. Year by year he followed up his success with journeyings further and further north, till in 1827 he found the noble pasturage of the Darling Downs, and the next year opened a road into the same district from the coasts of Moreton Bay. But the passage was so difficult, and the reputation of Brisbane convicts so unsavoury, that for many years the inland settlers trafficked with Sydney and Newcastle direct along the tracks of the table-land.

***Hume, 1824-5.***—Thus fared expansion northwards; the south also had its problem, a blank map-space from Goulburn to Bass Straits. Brisbane thought of landing a convict party at Wilson's Promontory, with an offer of freedom to those who should find their way across the unknown; but Hamilton Hume, already an authority on southern exploration, persuaded him to reverse the plan. Hume took charge of the party, and an old sea-captain, Hovell, joined him to do the scientific work of the survey; they plunged into the labyrinth of mountain-gullies south of Goulburn, turned westward to avoid the snow-covered Alps, dropped into a broad and richly-wooded valley whose central stream they christened the Hume, and struck south-west across a series of foot-hills that merged in undulating grass-lands,—a country of small flowing rivers, such as had not yet been found in Australia. The main range met them again with a barrier of impenetrable scrub, and this forced them so far west that they quite missed the head of Port

Phillip and only reached the inlet on which now stands Geelong. Hume afterwards declared he was sure that it was part of Port Phillip; but Hovell's calculations had been upset by the detours, and he maintained they were on Western Port. His opinion, as that of the scientific expert, was accepted officially. He, therefore, was sent with a party of settlers to occupy the new lands, and landing at the real Western Port, a region of swamp and scrub, found the task hopeless, and so postponed for ten years more the founding of Victoria.

***Sturt on the Darling, 1828-9.***—None of these expeditions touched the most puzzling problem of all, the one on which speculation had been busy ever since the coastline of the continent was mapped thoughout. That coastline showed in its whole circuit no great rivermouths, except perhaps on the northwest; where, then, did all the inland drainage go to? The weight of opinion inclined towards belief in a central sea. Oxley had tried to find it, and found at least impassable marshes: when in 1826-7-8 a three years' drought afflicted the land, Governor Darling got what good he might out of it by sending a party to the marsh country, now presumably at its driest. Charles Sturt was in command, with Hume for his second. They found the Macquarie marshes half dry, while the river channel vanished entirely: a month of riding to and from across unpromising plains brought them to a broad stream, which they welcomed with joy till they discovered that its waters were too salt to drink. Two months' patient search revealed nothing more hopeful, and Sturt went back to Sydney, labelling his disappointing river with the Governor's name.

***Sturt on the Murray, 1829-30.***—But other rivers flowed west into the unknown country, and of these the Murrumbidgee was next tried, because it rose among snow-covered hills and was so more likely to have a stream perennial and fresh. Sturt marched down its banks till the expected swamp stopped him, and then embarked his men in a couple of boats. The Lachlan mouth was passed among reeds, and

a few days later the quickening current hurried them into a noble river whose volume of water made Sturt sure this time of success. Down it the boats made haste to the sea, often in danger from the suspicious blackfellows: at last, a month's journey from their starting-place, the stream slackened and shallowed into a great lagoon, and Sturt found himself on the shore of Encounter Bay. Hovell had predicted this, but the vessel sent to meet them there went astray. They must go back along their own tracks worn out, on scanty rations, upstream, against a rising flood. And they did it, though men fell asleep or fainted as they rowed, and one lost his senses, and the leader himself went nearly blind.

***Mitchell, 1832-6.***—So it was a birdshaped colony that Darling handed over to Bourke, with the Nineteen Counties for its body, wide wings outspread northwards to the Darling Downs and south along the trail of Hume and Hovell, and for tail the regions found by Oxley and Sturt, whose swamps might well stand for bedraggled feathers. To fill in the gaps and complete the map of south-eastern Australia was the work of a new Surveyor-General, Thomas Mitchell. In 1832 he explored the district between Sturt's Darling and the Darling Downs. In 1835 he reached the Darling where Sturt had first seen it; but, travelling in a good season, found it fresh and full, winding among well-grassed plains, so that he was induced to follow it for three hundred miles south-west. In 1836 he undertook a bigger task still. He tracked Oxley's march down the Lachlan and connected it with Sturt's route along the Murrumbidgee and the greater river which Sturt had called the Murray; turning up an inflowing stream, which Sturt had noticed but lacked time to explore, he identified it with the Darling; then, retracing his steps along the Murray, he marched up it till he knew it must be at least the receiving channel of all Hume's rivers (as indeed it is, being the Hume itself). Now he struck southward and south-west again across the "exuberant" soil of the Upper Wimmera, crossed the main range, and came unexpectedly upon a settlement of white

men at Portland Bay. From this he made back towards Sydney as directly as he could, across a district that not many years later became the very heart of the gold-diggings, and so to the line of country traversed by Hume and Hovell: "and in returning" to quote his own words—he was a most poetical explorer—"over flowery plains and green hills, fanned by the breezes of early spring," he named the region Australia Felix.

The history of Victorian settlement, however, does not begin with Mitchell, or from New South Wales.

***Tasmania.***—Governor King in 1803 and 1804 had occupied the northern and southern estuaries of Tasmania, partly to anticipate the French, partly to provide isolated quarters for a special class of convicts. The blacks were hostile and the farmlands a disappointment, so that no great prosperity attended the first few years' work. Macquarie improved matters somewhat, but discipline was lax under his lieutenant-governor, Davey, and the settlers were harassed constantly with the brutal raiding of escaped convict bush-rangers. Davey's successor, Sorell, restored order for a while, and encouraged free men to establish the stud sheep farms which are still the island's pride. In the general reforms which followed on Bigge's report Tasmania found itself assigned an unpleasant function. It was to be the gaol of Australia, a prison-house for such criminals as showed themselves almost irreclaimable. While the mainland was to be administered with an eye to future self-government, the island must be devoted to the convict interest, and free men must feel themselves there on sufferance. The new Governor, George Arthur, was unflinching in his resolve to carry out this policy thoroughly,—all the more so, perhaps, because just before its inauguration there had been an influx of free settlers from England. He did his best, certainly, to make the colony a safe place to live in. The bushranger gangs were crushed out, and Sorell's penal establishment at Macquarie Harbour, from which they escaped too easily, abandoned for one at Port Arthur, whence escape was all but impossible. The blacks, after a vain attempt at coercion,

were induced to surrender themselves and go quietly to a reserve on one of the islands in Bass Straits. Still, the free man felt himself to be living in a gaol, even though it was an orderly gaol. And just across the straits was land, unoccupied, fertile—if reports might be trusted—free of the prison taint, full of tempting possibilities.

***Batman and Fawkner.***—The idea took hold of John Batman, Australian-born, the most noted of Tasmanian bushmen. In 1827 he made formal application to Governor Darling for lands at Western Port, but got no good of it. He was active in Arthur's war against bushrangers, and helped to bring in the blacks. Then he heard that the Hentys, traders of his neighbouring township, Launceston, had settled themselves at Portland Bay whether the Sydney Government would or no. He consulted with Arthur (who was sincerely anxious to encourage settlers—outside his own island), and, fortified with his unofficial approval, sailed in May 1835 for Port Phillip, landing near the mouth of its western inlet. The country seemed good beyond his most sanguine expectations: the local blacks were as friendly as could be: he tramped all over the plains, brought his ship up to Yarra mouth, and made a solemn bargain with the chiefs of the nearest tribe for the transfer of six hundred thousand acres of land—the consideration being blankets and knives, flour, tomahawks, looking-glasses and scissors, and various articles of dress, besides a yearly rent of the same sort to the value of about £320. "This will be the place for a village," said he, as he came upon the site of Melbourne; and he hurried back to Hobart to persuade Arthur into giving him a formal British grant of the acquired property. In the meanwhile an independent expedition, organized by J. P. Fawkner, a townsman of Launceston, crossed the straits to Western Port, left it in disgust, entered Port Phillip and the Yarra, saw "the place for a village," and without a moment's delay proceeded to found one there. Batman came back to find them in possession: and there were pretty quarrels.

***The Settling of Port Phillip.***—Arthur, of course,

could do nothing officially, for the place was outside his jurisdiction. Bourke, as was his duty, warned all parties off as trespassers; but when Ministers in London confirmed this action and bade him expel the intruders, his common sense came to the rescue, and he induced the home Government to alter its decision. In March of 1837 he came round by sea for the official founding of Melbourne: six weeks later the first townlots were sold by auction, what is now the central block of ten acres realizing about £500. Within a year a similar block on the town's edge realized £2700. The Fawkner occupation and the Batman purchase were alike disallowed, but Batman and his friends (nearly all pastoralists) were given land to the value of £7000 in the splendid pasturage west of Geelong.

***An Unruly Baby.***—From the first the Port Phillip settlers were discontented and protestant. They had fixed themselves there in spite of Sydney, and objected to being put under it. Many of them had left Tasmania to get away from a convict colony, and professed themselves afraid that Sydney would unload its convicts on the new land. After the first two land sales, Melbourne lands were sold in Sydney —and of course, said the malcontents, all the money thus secured by Government was spent in the old capital. A Land and Emigration Commission appointed in London in 1840 recommended the splitting of New South Wales into three divisions, with centres at Moreton Bay, Sydney and Melbourne, and proposed a boundary for the southern division (the Murrumbidgee-Moruya line) which would have severed from Sydney districts well settled ten years before Melbourne was thought of. Sydney protested successfully: the boundary was fixed where the colonial boundary now runs: and Port Phillip was in a ferment. Not even the allotting of six elected members out of the twenty-four on the new Council appeased the angry southerners: their chief official, the judicious and exemplary Latrobe, was but a mere Superintendent (hateful word!) under the orders of Governor Gipps: they chafed, they murmured, they drew up petitions.

# CHAPTER IV

## *Experiments: West Australia, South Australia, New Zealand*

*Governors*

*West Australia:*

1829. Capt. JAMES STIRLING, R.N.
1839 JOHN HUTT.
1845. Col. CLARKE
1847. Col. IRWIN.
1848. Capt. FITZGERALD, R.N.
1855. ARTHUR KENNEDY.

*South Australia:*

1836. Capt. HINDMARSH, R.N.
1838. Col. GAWLER.
1841. Capt. GEORGE GREY.
1845. Col. ROBE.

*New Zealand:*

1840. Capt. HOBSON, R.N.
1842. Lieut. SHORTLAND, R.N. (*Acting*).
1843. Capt. FITZROY.
1845. Capt. GEORGE GREY (made Sir George Grey in 1848).

### A.—*West Australia* (1826-60)

***French Scares.***—When England first busied herself with Australia it was not certain that the part discovered by Cook was all of a mass with the regions already coasted by Dutch ships: and to avoid any infringement of Dutch rights the western boundary of New South Wales was fixed at 135° E. After the great wars of 1793-1815 we were not so humble, and when Macquarie's work ensured the permanent success of our settlement in Australia it was felt advisable to secure the whole continent against outside intrusion—especially since France, recovering quickly (as usual) from her disasters, was inclined to seize what unoccupied land she could find as a tribute to the memory of Baudin. Hovell's expedition to Western Port in 1826 was instigated by this motive: just such another expedition had

already occupied Melville Island in the extreme north, but abandoned it in 1829 as unprofitable. A third British station, of a purely military kind, was set at a more important point still—King George's Sound in the far south-west, the first good natural harbour on the track of ships from Europe.

***The Swan River Settlement.***—Next year (1827) Captain Stirling, after inspecting the new fort, sailed along the western coast till he came upon the mouth of the Swan River, which struck him (being a sailor, not a farmer) as the very place for a thriving settlement: and on his return to England his language was enthusiastic. He spoke to willing ears. The age of theorizers was just dawning on England, and every man carried Utopias in his brain: Stirling's descriptions offered to at least one Utopia the chance of being realized on virgin soil. James Peel asked the Government for four million acres of this new paradise, to be valued at eighteenpence an acre and paid for in emigrants—in the cost, that is, of importing them. The Colonial Office was hardly ready to found small principalities of this kind, but adopted many of Peel's ideas into a scheme of its own. Immigrant parties made up in the proportion of at least five women to six men, going to West Australia and maintaining themselves there at their own expense, were to get grants of land proportioned to their expenditure: Peel's valuation was accepted, so that for every £3 expended the settler would be given a forty-acre block. Tobacco and cotton, sugar and flax, drugs (they did not quite know what drugs), horses for India, cattle for provisioning the navy—these would be some of the new country's staple products. There was land and to spare: the Governor took 100,000 acres in lieu of a salary. But—as the immigrants soon found out—its quality left much to be desired. Passengers by the first ships had to camp on a bleak island off the coast. Stirling, coming out as Governor, presently chose sites for his capital and its port, naming them Perth and Fremantle: but he made the great mistake

of allowing the largest land-grant holders to choose their land first, so that Perth was soon hemmed in with huge estates and the small working farmer found himself thrust inland far from the central market.

***Slow progress.***—From the first the new colony lacked labour. Land, of a sort, was abundant, and there were many rich immigrants prepared to spend their whole fortune in colonizing it. Labourers were brought out, and were bound to work for their importer as strictly as law could bind them: but most of them had been "undesirables" in England, and the rest took their first chance of getting away to the more settled life and higher wages of the eastern colonies. Thither went also many of the small farmer class, and among them the Hentys, later of Portland Bay. A few held on doggedly. Townships formed slowly along the Swan and its tributary the Avon: Albany on King George's Sound was taken over from the Imperial authorities: a small town grew up just inside the Leeuwin, others were established by an Emigration Company at Australind and Bunbury: Roman Catholic missionaries made a settlement at New Norcia, some seventy miles N.N.E. of Perth. The capital and Albany were connected by a road. The colony struggled to take shape, and even tried an assisted immigration scheme: but its funds were small, and by 1849 it became clear that West Australia was simply "paying the passage of emigrants so far on their way either to Sydney or Adelaide." Yet labour must be had.

***Transportation to West Australia.***—New South Wales had in 1840 shaken itself free of transportation, but not without protests from many landowners in the less settled districts. West Australians were mostly of this class, and began to covet what their fellows had lost. As an experiment, boys had already been sent out to them from the reformatory at Parkhurst: the results were so encouraging that the local Council asked openly for convicts, and in 1850 got them. The cure was rapid. Convicts supplied the needed labour, but that was only part of their use: for they had to

be fed, and more feeding meant more farming, and more farming meant the taking up of new country, and that brought increased revenue, which the Government spent in assisting free immigration. The land was alive with ideas: new industries sprang up, coal was discovered, the long predicted export of horses to India became a fact: now that men were not afraid of starving, they had time to set about developing the many resources of their colony. In nine years the population mounted from five thousand to fifteen thousand: ten years more added ten thousand more inhabitants. Only —West Australia was not an island: and, as we shall see in a later chapter, it had to consider the feelings of its fellows in the east.

## B.—*South Australia*

***Edward Gibbon Wakefield.***—Before Stirling had well begun to grapple with the difficulties of his ill-considered enterprise, one of its worst defects had been foreseen. Edward Gibbon Wakefield brought to bear on the art of colonization the mind of a Whig philosopher—a useful instrument when tempered, as his was not, by the experience of a practical colonist. In 1829 he flung upon London a "letter from Sydney," that bitterly attacked Wentworth and his party. "They want trial by jury," he said, scared at the thought, "and a Legislative Assembly. They talk even of perfect independence. They are rebels, every one of them, at heart: and nothing but a sense of weakness deters them from drawing the sword." Sobering down, he detailed grievances. How could a country be great without a leisured class? and in New South Wales there could be none, for there was no leisure. The richest man must work: convict servants were detestable, and no free man would remain a servant long where land was so cheaply got. This was a strange, a new form of society: he advocated "extensions of an old society," the transplanting of British caste and formulae into the colonies. Cheap land was the stumbling-block: make land dear. Abolish free grants utterly: fix such a

price for farm lands as will prevent the labourer from buying them till he has worked hard for years on his master's estate: use the proceeds to bring out more labourers from England, neither starving nor swamping the colonial labour market, choosing young people if possible, and for every man bringing out a woman. So should capitalists never lack labour, and labourers never lack employment: the mechanism of colonial life would run smoothly, and the Whig Paradise be realized in the far South Seas.

***His friends and disciples.***—If only by abolishing land-grants and somewhat systematizing British ideals of colonization, Wakefield's proposals did great good. But he was a Whig, and therefore a formulist: a philosopher, and therefore neglectful of human nature: a stay-at-home, and so ignorant of Australian conditions. Moreover, while he, the originator, might have owned to mistakes and modified the details of his scheme, the men who in South Australia and New Zealand put that scheme into practice followed it blindly, misapplying and misconstruing it: it was for them an Abracadabra, fated like so many magic formulae to serve the personal interests of its users rather than the high aims of its discoverer. He had great friends: notable among them was Lord Durham, who gave to him much of the praise that welcomed his famous Report on British North America, the foundation of responsible government in British colonies But it was Australia's misfortune that he saw nothing of it himself till his health was broken and his life nearly over—that, like most colonial reformers of the day, he prescribed without seeing the patient and left the medicine to be made up by unskilful dispensers from adulterated drugs.

***The South Australian Act.***—He followed up his *pronunciamento* of 1829 by forming societies and companies to carry out his ideal. The Colonial Office was bombarded with draft charters. The public was assailed with pamphlets. In 1834 an Act of Parliament created the body of Colonization Commissioners for South Australia, nominally a huge region bounded only by geographical lines—132° E.,

141° E., 26° N.—practically the district between the Murray and St Vincent's Gulf to which Sturt's journey of 1830 had called attention. The Commissioners, acting through a Resident, were to look after land policy and emigration on Wakefield lines—a minimum price of twelve shillings per acre, all sales public and for cash, price to be uniform throughout the colony at any given date. The land revenue must be devoted to assisting the immigration of persons under thirty, families preferred, the sexes in equal proportion. Transportation was absolutely excluded. In other matters the colony would be administered as usual by the Crown through a Governor.

***Early Troubles.***—This was a great improvement on the West Australian scheme, but did not abandon its most fatal error. The land was selected and paid for in England, without any knowledge of its nature and capabilities: the Act, indeed, provided that £35,000 must be paid on this account before any further steps could be taken. (The mere fact that Englishmen were found to invest their money so much at haphazard throws a curious sidelight on the Time-Spirit of the thirties.) A less disastrous but no less fretting error was the division of powers between Resident and Governor. The first emigrant ship anchored off the coast in July 1836. There were quarrels about the site of the capital, the Governor being overborne by the settlers. There were more quarrels about the details of immigration and survey-work. Governor Hindmarch was recalled, and his successor, Colonel Gawler, united both offices in his person. He found the place upside down. The capitalists ought to have been living on their estates and giving employment to the poorer settlers. Instead, they were living at Adelaide and speculating in town lots. The labourers, finding no work to do, and no land to be had on which they might work for themselves, slipped away to Tasmania or New South Wales, where land was less than half the price; such of them as stayed knew very little about Australian tillage and had to be taught by emancipists from

Tasmania, not of the best class. Gawler entered on a scheme of public works far too big for the settlement's importance, in order to provide the poorer immigrants with some way of earning their living, and so concentrated the population more than ever on profitless labour in a single town. He spent all his own money in this way, and £155,000 of Government money, and drew bills on London for £400,000 more. As the Act had ordained that no expense whatever should fall on the British Exchequer, this extravagance brought about a crisis. The bills were dishonoured, and Gawler recalled. The colony was all but bankrupt.

***George Grey.***—Captain George Grey had distinguished himself in West Australia as an explorer and as Resident at Albany. He was at the moment on leave in England. The Colonial Office, stronger during these years in choosing men than in dictating policies, sent him posthaste to save the situation; and so began his uninterrupted career of rule for twenty-seven years over some of our least manageable colonies. Firmness and clear sight made his task in South Australia comparatively easy. He stopped at once all except the most urgent relief works, and cut down wages on those: the labourers were forced to scatter themselves again over the country, and unexpectedly found profitable work ready to their hand. For in the crisis many capitalists who had bought highpriced land were compelled to sell it at a loss, so that farms were now to be had at poor men's prices: and many young cattlebreeders from the Sydney side, who had driven their herds overland to sell in Adelaide, stayed to lease the pasturelands that lay along the lower Murray. Figures show well the immediate benefit of Grey's policy. In 1841 the colony had a population of less than 15,000 (8000 of whom were in or about Adelaide), and only 2500 acres of tillage. In 1845 the population was 22,000, Adelaide detained only 7000 of them, and the tilled area had risen to 26,000 acres. Work, too, of other kinds showed itself now that the settlers had the heart to look for

it. Australia was still a land of farmers—except for the east coast coalmines of Newcastle: to Grey's colony came the first promise of the continent's wealth of metals. Ores of silver and lead were found on Mount Lofty, that hangs over Adelaide. Further north along the range Bagot opened up the once-famous Kapunda coppermine, and in 1845 the Burra Burra ores came to light—a find so rich that on £12,000 of capital £800,000 was paid in dividends. With such deserved good fortune crowning his good work, Grey left the colony cheerful and prosperous in the hands of a stop-gap successor and departed in haste for New Zealand.

## C.—*New Zealand*

The history of New Zealand is in itself so different from that of Australia—because the land, the climate, the indigenous products, the native inhabitants are so different—that it cannot be safely told to readers whose minds are still in touch with Australian conditions. To follow it rightly, one must start afresh; efface the vision of low broad tablelands and arid plains, thin-foliaged eucalyptus, blackfellows few and vagrant: and replace it with a thought of beech and pine jungle, the home of Maoris in organized warlike tribes; wonderful lakes, swift-flowing perennial streams, birdlife and plantlife harmless and abundant; behind all, the coned volcanoes of the North Island or the great ravines and ranges and the peaked perpetual snowline of its fellow. Australia is Romance, to the man who lives in it and knows it: but New Zealand is Romance free and open to all men of the South, whether they home in it or take their leisure merely, or but divine its unseen glamour across twelve hundred miles of sea.

Yet the history must be told, after some fashion: for the colonizing of these lonely islands is a part of the same movement that made Australia British. The intruders that broke in upon them were of the same race, spurred by the same motive, inclined—the Anglo-Saxon has a touch of Procrustes

in him—to master opponents, human and subhuman, by the same summary methods. The more noteworthy names reappear in both stories—Cook, King, Marsden, Gipps, Grey, Wakefield. And of late years their very isolation, mothering a kind of selfconscious pride in them, has set New Zealanders to experiments in social law that make their State a political laboratory, full of value both for their neighbour Commonwealth and for the Empire at large.

Europe's first impressions of New Zealand were of the fierceness of its inhabitants. Tasman was so beset by them that he did not put foot to ground there. Cook, though by great patience he made friends with them, was at first greeted with cheerful cries of "Come on shore and be clubbed!" and never knew when he might have to shoot a man. Marion du Fresne, visiting North Island two years later, was killed and eaten with sixteen of his crew in spite of a month's friendly intercourse. Quiet people shunned the islands, and the early Governors of New South Wales prohibited settlement as far as they could. But the timber was good, and the coastal seas full of whale and seal, and the Maoris—if you ran the risks—eager to trade: tattooed heads, more especially, of which the constant intertribal wars furnished a steady supply, were to be bought at a reasonable price in iron or firearms. Maoris joined the crews of whaler and sealer: white adventurers distributed themselves among the tribes, acting as middlemen between chiefs and traders, and often as leaders of their tribe's Young Guard.

***The Tapu.***—The everpresent danger of such intermingling lay in the religious stringency of Maori customs, which few of the white men took the trouble to understand: more especially of the *tapu*, which cut off certain persons and things from tribal use or intercourse, sometimes by way of honour, sometimes as a disgrace, or for merely utilitarian reasons. A chief was *tapu*; his person, his food, any article he fancied and marked for his own, were sacred from the touch of his inferiors. *Tapu* also was anyone who touched a dead body—"unclean," as the Jews phrased it, for many

a day. So were the men who hoed the potato-fields, as long as they ought to be working: so, temporarily, were all manner of places and people, by rules that not even the Maoris themselves could always remember. It was for violation of a *tapu* that du Fresne and his men were killed. The flogging of a young chief, one of a trading ship's crew, brought about the "Boyd" massacre in 1809, when sixty-six whites out of seventy were killed by treachery, and the four saved cost the lives of the chief who saved them and most of his clan.

***Samuel Marsden.***—This chief was one whom Englishmen knew well already, for King had invited him to Sydney in 1806, and at King's table he had met and interested Samuel Marsden. In the story of New South Wales Marsden's part was mainly political and controversial: his work in New Zealand stands apart, unchallengeable, on a higher level. That men so manly should be so barbarous was a constant reproach to his Christianity. He organized a mission party; though the "Boyd" massacre caused Macquarie to forbid its sailing, yet the traders were more strictly looked after, and in 1814 Marsden himself was able to cross to the Bay of Islands and begin his work with the reconciliation of two hostile tribes. Often baffled by the Maori's natural joy in fighting, by the incitements of reckless white adventurers, by unintelligent zeal among his own subordinates, he never lost hope or strenuousness. It was much to uproot cannibalism, to suppress headhunting, to introduce the more useful European handicrafts: it was not his fault if for practical purposes Maori study of the Bible ended with the Books of Kings.

***Hongi and Te Rauparaha.***—Indeed, the missionaries came upon very troublous times. As long as weapons were home-made, the scattered tribes were able to hold their own against each other. Firearms upset this balance. Muskets decided every conflict, and muskets must be bought from the white man, so that the final advantage lay with rich tribes and such as held the coast where white men were accustomed

to land for trade. Thus grew the power of Hongi, chief of the Bay of Islands tribe. Though Marsden would help him to no arms, he had other devices: he went to England, was fêted by George IV, brought back to Sydney valuable presents, sold them all there for muskets and ammunition, and on his return to New Zealand raided the North Island far and wide. Dying in 1828, he left his countrymen so sick of wars that north of Lake Taupo there was comparative peace for many years. In the south, however, another chief was making himself master of the Straits country—Te Rauparaha, of Kawhia first, organizer of small tribes against the overbearing men of the Waikato, who drew his confederates southwards out of Hongi's reach towards the second trading centre in Queen Charlotte's Sound; and presently established his headquarters on Kapiti island, ranging his warriors along the coasts from Wanganui to Port Nicholson and from Tasman Bay to Cloudy Bay.

***Half-measures.***—In 1831 news came oversea to Sydney of a great massacre in Akaroa wrought by Te Rauparaha with the treacherous aid of an English trader. Darling was urgent with the Government at home that some definite control should be at once established in New Zealand, if not for mere humanity's sake, at least to save the credit of the British nation. Moving slowly, the Colonial Office in 1833 appointed James Busby Resident at the Bay of Islands, explaining to him carefully that he had no authority to use force—nor, indeed, any force to use—but must maintain order by tact and personal influence alone. Busby had little success among the whites, but, working hand in hand with the missionaries and doing nothing in any quarrel until he had patiently heard both sides, managed to appease the ever-suspicious natives and convince them that England was their friend. In 1835 he instigated the confederation of the principal northern tribes as the United Tribes of New Zealand, with a legislature and a flag of their own, under the protectorate of Britain. It was a fantastic notion, and Ministers in London repudiated the protectorate, but it

accustomed the chiefs to an idea that was soon to be better realised.

***Wakefield again.***—British Governments not infrequently have their hand forced, and always resent it: yet, between South Africa and New Zealand, they ought to be used to it by now. In 1839 Lord Melbourne's Ministry was doing its best to let things alone. Lord John Russell, its Colonial Secretary, insisted that New Zealand was an independent country, and must be treated as such, though Busby clamoured for stronger control and Captain Hobson with Bourke's approval formulated a scheme of consulates. These, however, were officials, and could be snubbed; Gibbon Wakefield was not so easily got rid of. For South Australia by no means exhausted his energies. In 1836 he moved a Parliamentary Committee with dramatic pictures of the unscrupulous white man robbing the simple Maori of his lands for worthless barter. Next year he induced Lord Durham, who in 1825 had helped to finance a North Island colonizing scheme that failed badly, to found the New Zealand Association. When after much palavering that also came to nothing, it was replaced by a New Zealand Company, which, as the Government would not help it, determined to help itself. Things moved quickly now, for there was need of haste. Louis Philippe of France desired to be especially the king of French traders, and was searching the world for markets to annex. He had begun with Algeria; when that seemed safe, his fleet was sent to pick up what it could in the Pacific, seized the Marquesas, and was busy about Tahiti. Now he had his eye on New Zealand, and a French Company was preparing an expedition to occupy Akaroa.

***The New Zealand Company.***—The New Zealand Company became suddenly energetic. It despatched Gibbon Wakefield's brother with a shipful of settlers to purchase and occupy the coastlands of Cook Strait. Copying South Australian precedents, it sold blocks of land in those yet unknown districts for cash to men who did not trouble to enquire

into its right of ownership. Whatever excuses may be made for it, this is inexcusable—that it made no enquiries, secured no territories beforehand, listened to no warnings, took no precautions: that, when two-thirds of the South Island lay open to its enterprise, fertile, wellwatered, almost empty of natives, it flung its too credulous clients along the edge of the windy Straits among the warriors of Te Rauparaha. To match against him so bluffly injudicious a man as Colonel Wakefield was sheer folly. Wakefield knew little of Maori customs and cared less. He prepared titledeeds after the English fashion. He invited chiefs aboard, showed them his merchandise—a miscellaneous collection, from muskets and calico to Jews' harps and sealing wax—and got them to sign three documents, which were vaguely explained to some of them by a low-class white trader. Then he wrote home triumphantly, claiming to have purchased something like twenty million acres of land.

But the British Government had taken action at last. On the news of Wakefield's sailing it annexed New Zealand to New South Wales, made Captain Hobson Lieutenant-Governor, and sent him off to arrange the details of annexation with Gipps in Sidney. Gipps, thus set free to act, at once took the step, long urged by Busby, of proclaiming that no land transaction with Maoris would be recognised till it had been investigated by a Commission. Armed with this, Hobson sailed for the Bay of Islands, summoned the northern chiefs to meet him at Busby's home near Waitangi, and there made with them a notable treaty. The missionaries explained its provisions in detail to the chiefs, and they to their tribes by the council-fire at night. Clause by clause was debated among them, and their comments showed how well they understood. The treaty was signed by forty-six leading chiefs at Waitangi, and then taken round the North Island and into the South[1]: everywhere there was full

[1] To prevent confusion it must be understood that South Island, as here used, means the second large island, which was formerly sometimes called Middle Island

explanation and full debate: within six months 512 chiefs had signed it, and from that time to this the Maoris have held by it as their Magna Charta.

***The Treaty of Waitangi.***—It is a simple enough document. The first clause ceded to the Queen of England all the chiefs' rights and powers of sovereignty. By the second the Queen guaranteed to the tribes full, exclusive, and undisturbed possession of their lands: the chiefs, on their part, agreeing to sell the land, if they wished to part with it, only to the Queen's officials. The third clause gave the Maoris all the rights and privileges of British subjects. Hobson was satisfied, for his business was to keep order, and the cession of sovereignty gave him full powers to do so. The Maoris were satisfied, for they were in a mood weary of tribal quarrels, ready to acknowledge a sovereign authority of a peaceable kind · and their land was secured to them. One set of people was not satisfied—the New Zealand Company and the colonists it was importing. They wanted land, and this treaty blocked the way.

***Maori landlaw.***—For the second clause implicitly recognized the Maori law of landholding. And out of a tangle of usages the law simplified itself to this—that the tribe owned the land, and only the tribe, acting deliberately and as a whole, could part with it. A chief acted as representative of his tribesmen, not over their heads. A minor chief might be forbidden by his superior to sell land, even though his sept of the tribe occupied the land and agreed to its sale. As for sale by an individual not a chief, it was unthinkable. Nor did a tribe lose title to its land by expulsion; if the victors ceased to occupy their conquest, ownership reverted to the former holders. The law, like many so-called "savage" customs, was admirably devised for its makers' purpose: but it invalidated nearly every purchase of importance that had hitherto been made by Europeans, and threw a net of difficulties in the way of future colonization.

***Governor and Company.***—Hobson, therefore, spent his governorship in a duel with the New Zealand Company.

There were, of course, many other claimants to land, Wentworth among them: but they were Australians, and Gipps dealt firmly with them. The Company could not so be disposed of. Its friends at home became more powerful as the Melbourne Ministry felt its hold upon Parliament weakening. They procured the removal of Gipps' influence by an Act which allowed New Zealand to be made an independent colony: though Hobson was continued (as Governor) in chief authority, his new Instructions bore the Wakefield imprint—the uniform price of Crown lands, the system of buying your farm in England and choosing it after arrival in the islands. Moreover, because Gipps had confirmed only one of Colonel Wakefield's purchases—110,000 acres out of twenty million—the Company was given a Royal Charter that assured it of receiving four acres for every pound it spent in colonization. For the present this meant a grant of a million acres: the Company went on to demand that it should be allowed to choose the million where it liked, and make Hobson responsible for persuading native owners to a sale. Nor was this a demand merely. Emigrant bands of the Company's sending followed each other to the South Sea, armed with land orders, clamouring for farms: Wakefield threw the blame of any delay on Hobson, and proceeded to settle them in districts still disputed, at Taranaki, at Wanganui, at Nelson. The Maoris protested, using as little force as might be, and avoiding collisions: but collision was bound to come.

***Hobson's work.***—Hobson did not live to see it. Paralysis struck him not long after the signing of the Waitangi Treaty. For two years he worked on, sick, and weary, and lonely: denied the support of Gipps, bitterly attacked by the best class of Englishmen then in the colony, set to guard a wild and suspicious race from the lawlessness of island traders and the encroachments of landhungry settlers. The work killed him, but not before he had done much. He had secured the South Island whole for Britain, annexing Akaroa four days before the arrival of a French warship on the

same errand. He had founded Auckland on the best city-site in the islands, its narrow neck cutting communications between the chief Maori tribes, its double harbour offering unlimited possibilities for commerce. And he had well paved the way for a sure friendship between brown man and white man. "Let not a troubler come amongst us" a Maori chief prayed the Queen: "let him be a good man, as the Governor who has just died."

***Three Years of Trouble.***—Shortland, who took his place, was a stop-gap and knew it, committing himself as little as possible to decisive action. The next Governor, Captain Fitzroy of the "Beagle," was a compound of good intentions and weak will. Between them New Zealand all but lapsed into chaos. For Colonel Wakefield saw in Hobson's death his opportunity of securing an unconfirmed landpurchase on the Wairau River, which Te Rauparaha refused to give up. He sent surveyors to it, and the Maoris expelled them. Then he sent his brother Arthur with a police magistrate and forty men to arrest the recalcitrant chief. There was a wordy quarrel: one of the whites let off his gun and killed a Maori woman, Te Rauparaha's daughter. The natives charged, and in the rush Wakefield and eight others were killed while trying to surrender. The news went through the tribes, and stirred them: still more were they stirred when they heard of Fitzroy's final award, for he admitted that right was on Te Rauparaha's side and refused to punish anyone for the killing. There can be no doubt that he was just, from our point of view: but for the Maoris bloodshed wiped out justice, and they reckoned it cowardice that Fitzroy should neither demand the death of the slayers nor claim the land on which British blood had been spilt. The tribes spoke among themselves of an exterminating war.

***The First Maori War.***—North of Auckland there was more trouble. Fitzroy needed money, and tried to obtain it from customs duties. Trade languished, and the traders blamed the duties, so he repealed them and substituted a landtax. That struck at settlement: he went back to

customs duties, and appeased the settlers by allowing them to buy land direct from natives if they paid ten shillings per acre to the Treasury. When they growled at this, he lowered the payment to a penny per acre. Suddenly a clan of northern Maoris, under Hongi's son-in-law, raided the Bay of Islands settlement. While Fitzroy was trying to smooth over this disturbance, news came from England that the Waitangi Treaty had been attacked in Parliament, that repudiation was imminent. The news was exaggerated, but it had its effect: the raids became a war, and British troops, attacking the rebels' fort at Ohaeawai, were defeated with great loss by a far inferior force.

***Governor Grey and the Maoris.***—At that Fitzroy was recalled, and Grey took hold on New Zealand. At once he quieted the wavering chiefs by re-proclaiming the Treaty of Waitangi, and won their adhesion by a firm refusal to admit neutrality. Then he chased the rebels into their strongest fort, Ruapekapeka, pressed the siege, and drove them, fighting gallantly, into the bush. The victory re-established British *prestige* in the north: Grey hurried to the Straits, and ended a petty warfare that was fretting the Wellington district by the seizure and internment of Te Rauparaha. When peace was assured, he made the Maoris his special care. He learnt their language and studied their legends, looked after their health and their education, gave the chiefs official position and duties, and set the tribesmen to work off their energies on roadmaking instead of fighting. Nor was he alone, as Hobson had been. Few men have had better adjutants and truer comrades than the two men who worked with Grey—William Martin, the Chief Justice, and George Selwyn, the Anglican Bishop of the colony. Selwyn, more especially, was a man among men, a pioneer, an organizer, indomitable, a ruler in body and mind.

***Grey and the Colonial Office.***—Fitzroy's "penny an acre" proclamation was annulled as soon as possible, and Hobson's landlaw reinstated, Grey's personal influence with the natives making it easier to obtain land from them by

legitimate means. But now a new danger showed itself. The party of colonial reformers had not been quiescent all these years, though with Peel in power and Lord Stanley at the Colonial Office they were reduced to merely critical functions. But it was their parliamentary champion, Lord Howick (soon to be Earl Grey), who induced a Committee of the Commons by one vote to condemn the Treaty of Waitangi in Fitzroy's time: and when the Peel Ministry left office in 1846 the new Earl Grey took charge of the Colonial Office. If the last Whig Secretary had been King Log, this was King Stork. For Australia, as we shall see, the years of his tenure were one long struggle against measures urged upon the colonists by his obstinate and ill-advised beneficence. But for Governor Grey and his comrades, New Zealand might have suffered similarly. Earl Grey began by passing through Parliament an Act for the Government of New Zealand, an elaborate mechanism of provinces and assemblies and corporations which left all power in the hands of the richer whites. He added to it a series of instructions in which occupation and use were declared to be the Maoris' only title to land, all territory not actually so occupied becoming waste lands at the Crown's disposal. The Governor publicly announced his receipt of these documents, utilized as much of them as allowed him to appoint Lieutenant-Governors in the Auckland and Wellington districts, and explained that the rest would be a dead letter till he heard from home again. Then he wrote to Earl Grey advising him to cancel the instructions: Martin and Selwyn backed him up strongly: the chiefs of the Waikato petitioned the Queen direct: and ministers in London saw nothing for it but to yield. The Governor's victory was confirmed by a K.C.B., an honour given him for his pacification of the Maoris, but coming aptly on a more important achievement.

***Grey and the Company.***—By this time the Company was on its last legs. Tidings of war had long ago checked the stream of settlers, and funds ran very low, so that it had

to use all its Parliamentary influence to procure loans of £236,000 from the British Treasury. Now it did what it should have done at first—turned its attention to the southern parts of South Island, and obtained a grant of all Crown lands in that region. Grey bought for it such districts south of Kaikoura as had a Maori population: subsidiary companies were formed, and a new era of settlement began. In the extreme south, Otago Harbour and the Clutha valley became centres of a Scottish province, peopled by adherents of the recently severed Free Church of Scotland. Above them, in the treeless and grassy plains of Canterbury, an Anglican body under Selwyn's auspices obtained preëmptive rights over two and a half millions of acres. In these two communities Gibbon Wakefield, himself in his last years a colonist of Canterbury, saw his teaching developed more fully and satisfactorily than ever before. Otago land cost the settler £2 an acre, Canterbury land £3: out of each sum 10s. paid for the land, the rest was devoted to road-making, educational and religious endowments, and the supply of labourers from home. Grey was distinctly unsympathetic, but for the most part let the new provinces alone

# CHAPTER V

## *The Touch of Gold*

*Governors*

| *New South Wales:* | *Tasmania:* |
|---|---|
| Sir CHARLES FITZROY, 1846-1855. | Sir J. EARDLEY WILMOT, 1843-1846. |
| *Victoria:* | Sir WILLIAM DENISON, 1847-1855. |
| JOSEPH LATROBE, 1851-1854. | *South Australia:* |
| Sir CHARLES HOTHAM, 1854-1855. | Sir HENRY YOUNG, 1848-1854. |

***The New Council.***—The Constitution of 1842 was drawn up by squires for squires. It postulated a farming community—one uses "farming" in the English sense, to include stockowning as well as agriculture—with marked class-distinctions and intelligence accompanying wealth: the social structure, that is, which Wakefield desired but declared unattainable in New South Wales. Nor did this make it the less acceptable to Wentworth and his party. They were in no sense democrats. They had claimed at first that English records should not count against persistent good behaviour in Australia: therefore they were "emancipists." They had urged later that men born in the colony were not therefore inferior to importations *from* England: so they became advocates of self-government. But always they were of the aristocratic persuasion: and we are compelled to own, with regret, that their ideal might easily have taken shape in an oligarchy no less narrow than that of the late South African Republic—though it would at least have had the saving grace of honesty.

***Financial Squabbles.***—The new Council, therefore, devoted itself to landholders' grievances chiefly, demanding

cheap land for squires to buy or squatters to lease, and plaguing the Governor for full control of the revenue obtained therefrom. Financial difficulties arose mainly over two regulations of the British Ministry's devising—neither, from the Imperial point of view, unreasonable. One established in the colony a scheme of District Councils to take over the management of all such matters as our County Councils deal with, except the police: these remained under the central Government's control, while the Councils were to pay half the expense of maintaining them. The second concerned the distribution of moneys received for the purchase or lease of land. Half of this land fund was to be devoted by the Governor to assisting immigration: the rest he was to spend on care of the aborigines and on policing and opening up unsettled districts, handing over any surplus to the ordinary revenue, which was under the Council's control. The first difficulty was soon got over. Wentworth argued that, if District Councils shared the expenses of the police, they should also share the control: Gipps admitted the force of the argument, retained the whole control, and took over the whole expense.

***Waste Lands Imperial or Colonial?***—But the second regulation raised a very important question, which lay at the root of nearly all mid-century disputes between colonists and the mother country. The "waste lands of the Crown"—to whom did they belong? On this all parties in the British Parliament were agreed: they belonged to Britain in trust for the Empire as a whole. Gipps maintained this view both officially and personally, deducing from it the right of the Imperial Government to use the resulting revenues as it chose; he considered it an act of generosity that all the money should be spent for the benefit of New South Wales, and some of it even placed at the local Assembly's disposal. That Assembly, however, Wentworth vigorously leading it, upheld a view directly contrary. "Australia for the Australians" said the councillors: the land of the colony for the use of the colonists and in their sole control. That Gipps

should regulate prices and dispose of purchasemoneys without their consent, against their wishes, was unconstitutional, tyrannical: it was Taxation without Representation (formulae gain half their effect from their capital letters). Round this the fight raged: and it was perhaps as well that the Council made it a personal matter against Gipps, instead of rousing public opinion against the British Government whose instructions he was carrying out.

***The Squatters.***—Whichever view one holds, the Imperial or the Colonial, it is impossible to doubt that Gipps did what was in the end to the colony's advantage. For the disposal of landrevenues was only one feature in the battlefield: far more important was the struggle over landprices. The South Australian scheme demanded high prices not only in South Australia but in all neighbouring communities (otherwise settlers would naturally drift away to the cheap land), and after much discussion between Gipps and the Colonial Office an Imperial Act of 1842 fixed £1 per acre as the minimum price all over Australia, and auction as the method of sale. But this, said the New South Wales Council, was far too much for areas in the back country: agriculturists might be able to pay such prices within the twenty Counties, but for stockowners' "runs" it was absurdly high. Gipps admitted it was so, but saw no need to sell back-country areas as yet. At the same time he proposed to make the stockowners pay a little more than they yet had done. They were a class by themselves, these "squatters"—so called because at first they "squatted," or took up a temporary abode, on Crown lands without leave. They were trespassers, of course, and the authorities called them so: but the wool of their sheep was the main source of the colony's wealth, and they knew they would not be seriously interfered with. To meet the case Bourke had devised, and Gipps in 1839 legalized, a system of temporary grazing licenses, permits to trespass within a given "pastoral district" of large area: individuals might settle their respective run-boundaries between themselves.

But this system had two defects—it charged no more for a large number of runs than for one small one, and it charged far too little for the smallest. In 1844, therefore, Gipps ordained that each run should be licensed separately at a fee of £10 per year. The new rule touched, though ever so lightly, the squatters' pockets, and they filled the Council with angry reproaches. Wentworth and Windeyer voiced their complaints in debate. Martin and Forster strove to make *The Atlas* for Gipps what *The Australian* had been for Darling. Broken in health, but undaunted to the last, the Governor stayed at his post till the Peel Ministry was succeeded by the colonial-reform Whigs, and then went home to die.

***Convicts again.***—Sir Charles Fitzroy, his successor, did politically just what he was wanted to do: that is to say, as little as possible on his own initiative. His "Colonial Secretary," Deas Thomson, did all the governing. The Council increased its hold on financial matters. The squatters were soothed with an Act of the home Parliament that gave them fixed tenure of their runs for a term of years with preëmptive rights at the end of the term. Port Phillip continued to demand separation, but otherwise a mild content was in the air. Then men began to whisper again a word of evil omen—Transportation.

An Order-in-Council of 1840 had left only two penal settlements in Australasian seas, Tasmania and Norfolk Island. On these two the hardly-lessened stream of convicts was directed: nineteen thousand reached Tasmania in five years (1842-6), though at the beginning of the period its whole population numbered only forty-seven thousand.[1] Lord Stanley proposed to alleviate the evil by establishing a new convict-colony at Port Curtis, a still untouched district on the north-east coast. W. E. Gladstone, Colonial Secretary in Peel's Ministry during its last six months, preferred to revive transportation to the already

[1] In 1850, though the flow had dwindled a good deal, more than half the inhabitants were either convicts or freedmen.

NEW SOUTH WALES IN 1841, SHOWING PASTORAL DISTRICTS

settled colonies under conditions that he hoped would sugar the pill; and the New South Wales Council, led by squatters hungry for cheap labour, recommended that his offer be accepted.

***The "Exiles."***—So the democracy of Australia came into being. For the townspeople wanted no convicts, and began at once a campaign of public meetings and petitions, while Charles Cowper fought Wentworth in the Council. The landowners had set themselves directly against the current of popular feeling, and a new party, unrepresented in the Legislature and therefore all the louder outside it, took shape and solidity behind the turmoil. Meanwhile Earl Grey took over the Colonial Office and his predecessor's plan, and began by sending to Australia a class known as "exiles"—men who had received a pardon conditional on their not leaving whatever extra-European settlement they might be shipped to. The protest against these men was weaker, and Grey was thus led to hope that agitation had died down. He went a step further, and proposed to send ticket-of-leave men: and in the despatch which embodied this proposal he ingenuously added that to avoid delay the Order-in-Council of 1840 was to be revoked at once, and the scheme would be acted upon till an answer to this despatch was received.

***The "Hashemy."***—Sydney burst into wild anger, and a great public meeting resolved not "to receive the offenders of the mother-country, whether under the name of convicts, exiles, or any other designation, upon any terms whatever." The Melbourne men forced from Fitzroy, who was visiting their town, a definite promise that no convicts should be landed in Port Phillip. In June, 1849, the ship *Hashemy* anchored in Port Jackson: before her cargo of two hundred and twelve convicts could be put ashore the citizens of Sydney crowded to Circular Quay, the landingplace, and sent a deputation to Fitzroy with strong protests that induced him, without yielding officially, to pass on the *Hashemy* and ships that followed it to Moreton Bay. But he also wrote

home a contemptuous account of the agitation: and when this was known, Cowper and his friends steadied their followers for a final attack by forming the Anti-transportation League, that not only bound the mainland colonies to withstand any further establishment of penal settlements, but carried the war into Tasmania. There transportation had been suspended in 1846, but revived again after two years in spite of promises to the contrary; and, the Straits being so narrow, Australia could not feel clean until Tasmania was made so.

***Transportation abolished.***—At length the pressure on Earl Grey became too great to be borne. To the last he was unconvinced. He made plaintive appeals to the inhabitants of New South Wales to take things calmly and not be blind to their true interests. But the Council, by this time enlarged and made more representative, added its resolutions to the petitions of the League, and he gave way. What he did grudgingly his successor, Sir John Pakington, confirmed and added to, admitting the justice of the colonists' remonstrances, and pledging the Imperial Government to discontinue transportation to all parts of Eastern Australia.

***The separation of Port Phillip.***—The enlargement of the Council was due very largely to the importunity of Port Phillip residents, who hated their dependence on Sydney. Gipps, as usual, had the awkward task of representing their views to the Colonial Office and simultaneously enforcing Colonial Office decisions against them: he convinced Lord Stanley, but the fall of Peel's Ministry rendered that useless. Earl Grey made vague promises, and forgot them. Melbourne in 1848 determined to remind him: at the next election he found himself returned as that town's representative in the Sydney Council. Enquiring, he was told that Sydney was too far away for Melbourne men to attend the Council, and an absentee member would represent them better than a Sydney man. Anxious, in the interests of his transportation scheme, to appease colonial feeling in other ways, he called upon the Committee of the Privy

Council for Trade and Plantations, which had long ceased to concern itself with the colonies, to consider the whole question of Australian constitutions. In April, 1849, the Committee reported. Port Phillip ought to have separation. The various Australian Councils should be called on to amend their own constitutions, submitting the new schemes to the Imperial Government for criticism and, if approved, confirmation. District Councils should be encouraged. There should be a General Australian Assembly to deal with customs duties, the post-office, intercolonial railways, lighthouses and shipping regulations, Supreme Court jurisdiction, weights and measures, and other matters referred to it by all colonies interested. The Committee's recommendations were embodied in an Act passed next year—except those dealing with a federal Assembly, of which nothing was left but the empty title of Governor-General for the Governor of New South Wales. In 1851 four colonies took advantage of the Act—the mother colony, its new offshoot Victoria, Tasmania, and South Australia, which had been progressing quietly since Grey's departure, disturbed only by a squabble over mineral royalties between Governor Robe and his Council. Each new Legislature was for the present on Sydney lines—a single chamber, twothirds elected, the rest half nominee and half official. Before they met, Eastern Australia was upside-down.

***The First Gold-rush.***—For some years Australians had been reading interestedly about the Californian goldfields and the wild life there, and some of the more adventurous took ship for San Francisco, among them a certain Edward Hargraves. To him, as he prospected Californian gullies, there came a remembrance of gullies like them in the rugged Macquarie valley below Bathurst: the impulse drove him back to Australia, and on February 12, 1851, he found payable gold in a waterhole of Summerhill Creek. A month of searching confirmed his hopes: every creek for seventy miles showed gold: he disclosed his find to the Government, and by the middle of the year "Ophir," the scene of his

first discovery, and the great Turon gully that runs to the Macquarie, and valleys from end to end of the main range were alive with prospectors and diggers. The towns began to empty: Port Phillip, still in the first pride of independence, seemed likely to be again a mere sheepwalk. Melbourne offered rewards to the finder of a Victorian goldfield.

Then of a sudden New South Wales was almost forgotten. Clunes on a branch of the upper Loddon reported gold, and Buninyong south of it across the Dividing Range. Crossing hastily from one to the other, diggers camped a day's journey above Buninyong, and the world heard first of Ballarat. Before the end of the year even Ballarat was a minor name; diggings covered the Loddon valley under Mount Alexander, and further north yet men were beginning to open up the riches of Bendigo.

It was precisely in Victoria that the inrush of diggers was most dangerous. The goldfields of New South Wales were scattered along several hundred miles of the main range, isolated in deep cañons, separated from the capital by long and difficult mountain-roads. The resident population was large in proportion to the number of newcomers: the machinery of local control was in good working order. A great many of the diggers, moreover, were colonial born and accustomed to the personal liberty of the Briton. Victoria lacked every one of these advantages. Its richest fields, all contained within a area 80 miles square, had comparatively short and easy communication with each other and with Melbourne. At the beginning of 1851 it had perhaps 80,000 inhabitants: 65,000 immigrants landed in Melbourne in the first year of the gold-fever, and by 1856 the total number of newcomers was 337,000. Nor were these men easily controllible at the best of times: ex-convicts from Tasmania (eleven thousand arrived in seven months), stiff-necked Californians, political exiles, relics of the European revolutions of 1848, adventurers from every part and most races of the earth, mingled with the quieter crowds who came from England with their families to settle down. The

disturbing element was a minority, certainly: but it was an active and selfasserting minority.

***The License Troubles.***—To rule this motley assemblage Latrobe had no military, and a police force that dwindled every day. By greatly raising salaries and obtaining men from Tasmania—a picked corps of veteran soldiers—and England, he gradually mastered actual crime: but this achievement was due in great measure to the hearty co-operation of the diggers, who had their own way of dealing with camprobbers and the bushrangers who lay in wait for their gold on the road to Melbourne. Police duty on the goldfields, however, included a far less popular task—the collection of the license-fees which Latrobe, following the example of Fitzroy in New South Wales, levied on all diggers monthly. It was a clumsy scheme, adopted in the first days of the discovery, rendered comparatively inoffensive in New South Wales by the conditions mentioned a page or two back. In Victoria it was disastrous. The fee was thirty shillings a month—little enough out of a successful digger's pocket, but a heavy tax on the unlucky. The monthly collection, among crowds of men constantly augmenting, constantly shifting camp, who had no voice or interest in the disposal of the money, was irritating and gave many opportunities for fraud.

Latrobe was honestly anxious to be a good Governor, but lacked decision. His Council, jealous of its rights and not very sympathetic with the new element in the population, supported the diggers against him as long as the fees remained under Crown control: when the Colonial Office allowed them to be paid into the general revenue under local control, Councillors became ardent supporters of the licensing system. Latrobe, acting on advice from London, suggested that the fees should be replaced by a royalty levied on actual gold exports—a much fairer form of taxation, and one easily collected in Melbourne itself, beyond the turmoil of the camps. The Council would have none of it. But the diggers, once encouraged, refused to acquiesce in the hated

license-system. The Bendigo men were ringleaders: their indignation meetings at the end of 1851 had forced Latrobe to abandon a proposal for doubling the fee: in August, 1853, they fixed their own fee at ten shillings, pledged themselves publicly to pay no more, and grimly told more law-abiding diggers "We will not be responsible for your safety unless you join us." Latrobe renewed his proposal for a royalty; the Council rejected it again. "We have no vote for your Council" said Bendigo "and will not be bound by its laws." The Council compromised matters by lowering the license-fee, but there had been more than whispers of a revolt against the Government, and agitators saw their chance.

***Sir Charles Hotham.***—Latrobe, weary of a struggle too hard for him, found no comfort in the arrival of a regiment from England, and resigned his post in 1854. His successor, Sir Charles Hotham, had a firmer grip on the reins, and a clearer insight into the causes of discontent. The franchise, he saw, was the eventual remedy: to deserve it, the diggers must settle down as permanent inhabitants of the land. Let them show by orderliness and home-making that they wanted to be Victorian citizens: let them, in fact, follow in Bendigo the example of quiet Ballarat, where miners behaved like gentlemen, and walked peaceably to church on Sunday with their wives and families. Bendigo began to feel ashamed of itself.

***The Eureka Stockade.***—One night in October a man was murdered near a publichouse on the outskirts of Ballarat. The publican was accused of the crime, but acquitted by a too partial bench of magistrates. There was a riot, and the inn was burnt: Hotham marched up troops from Melbourne and arrested the chief rioters. The judge who sentenced them went out of his way to condemn political agitations that had disturbed England in past years, so angering many of the less excitable diggers who were proud of their Chartism. Ballarat—quiet Ballarat—began to seethe: the agitators of Bendigo flocked to this new centre of dis-

turbance, and formed a "Reform League" in whose programme universal suffrage figured side by side with the abolition of license-fees. The League demanded that Hotham should release the imprisoned rioters. The Governor refused that absolutely, but saw to it that the murder was re-investigated and justice done. The League adopted every grievance that any miner's discontent could allege against the Government, and suddenly broke into open revolt. A hillock on the "Eureka" lead,[1] commanding the road from Melbourne, was seized and fortified with a stockade, over which the insurgents flew a new flag, that of the "Republic of Victoria." Before the fortification was complete, or the steady drilling by their leaders had given the Leaguers discipline, a small body of troops was led by its commanding officer at early dawn of a Sunday against the stockade, and ten minutes' fighting ended both League and Republic.

There was no more open resistance to the Governor's authority, and he was soon able to reward the good behaviour of the miners as a whole by appointing a Commission to consider all their grievances. The Report of this body was shaped during 1855 into an Act of the Victorian Legislature, which abolished the licensing system, substituting for it a gold export duty (of half a crown per ounce) to provide revenue, and for control purposes a "miner's right" to be issued yearly on payment of £1. The goldfields became electorates apart from their surrounding farmlands, and the possession of a "right" entitled the miner to a vote in his district. No more was heard of insurrection or a republic as a matter of practical politics, and in time the manifestos of the League were almost forgotten. What men remembered was the crude overbearingness of the licensing system, the supporting of it by a military force, the actual conflict between miners and soldiers: and the Eureka Stockade, whose defenders were hardly at all Victorians and in the main not of any British

[1] The line of a buried riverbed along which miners' claims were situated.

nationality, became for many a long year a sentimental symbol of heroic Australian resistance to the mother-country's unwarranted domination.

***A golden harvest.***—The other colonies had less exciting years of transition. New South Wales was the only one in which important goldfields were opened up, and such spasms of lawlessness as troubled them were of merely local interest. Like it, Tasmania and South Australia suffered at first from loss of population, the hardier or wilder spirits of each colony abandoning all work in hand to seek their fortune in Victoria. But the compensating advantages were great. Gold could not be eaten, it must be used to buy food: New South Wales sold the impatient diggers meat, South Australia supplied flour, Tasmania vegetables, besides providing stocks of timber for building and fencing. Prices were tempting: meat was a shilling a pound instead of twopence, wheat was half a guinea a bushel, ordinary fence palings sold for a shilling each. South Australia improved the occasion brilliantly, running an escort between the diggings and Adelaide for the gold of its own diggers, and providing land on easy terms for men who had made all they wanted by mining and could find no good unoccupied farmland among the great sheep stations of western Victoria. In six years the South Australian population grew from 39,000 to 93,000, and the land revenue from £33,000 to £383,000: and the colony deserved it.

***Exploration and Discouragement.***—It was needed, too. South Australia in 1850 loomed large on the map, but in no other way: the earliest limits of the settlement—the Murray and St Vincent's Gulf—had been enlarged only by an extension northwards towards the head of Spencer's Gulf and the addition of a patch of good country in the south-east corner. This was due to no lack of enterprise among the settlers, but to the ill-luck of their chosen explorers, Eyre and Sturt the chief. Eyre during 1839 and 1840 did his best to penetrate the districts north of Spencer's Gulf, and found them scrubcovered or sterile, lacking fresh water.

Salt marshes he saw in plenty: Lake Torrens, indeed, seemed to stretch arms in every direction and quite bar progress northwards. In 1841 he forced his way west along the coast round the Great Bight through still more desolate country, where no water could be found along stretches of 150 miles at a time. He reached Albany, and won the praise his pluck deserved, but the result of all his journeys was dispiriting to South Australians. However in 1844 Captain Sturt, encouraged by Governor Grey and Lord Stanley, once more attacked the problem of the interior, evading Lake Torrens by a route which followed the Murray and Darling as far as Menindie. Pushing thence north-west he found nothing but clumsy hills and barren lands and very little water. One rocky and wellwatered glen there was, in the southern end of the Grey Range, where he camped for six months of heat so intense that men's fingernails grew brittle like glass: when at last rain came, he made westwards and found Lake Frome, which he took to be another arm of the ubiquitous Lake Torrens: he turned north-west, crossing patches of grass separated by sandridges, overjoyed to see the full waterholes of Cooper's Creek, cast down a few days later at sight of the Stony Desert, all fragments of quartz and sandstone. He thrust his way almost to where 24° S. crosses 138° E. (there is no other way of identifying localities in so desolate a country), then made haste back —for the few creeks were rapidly drying—to the Grey Range and the Darling, and returned to Adelaide a broken man in body and mind, the greatest and most ill-rewarded of Australian explorers. His countrymen, indeed, rewarded him as far as they could, South Australia with a pension, England with honours: but those were not the rewards that he longed most for.

So gold brought to each colony some form of prosperity. Victoria gained immediately wealth and a busy population, South Australia trade and farmers, New South Wales a market for its stock. Tasmania profited doubly: not only did it lose at once the most undesirable of its inhabitants, but

it gained the sure promise of an early relief from convictism. "This will make an end of the convict-question" said Deas Thomson when Hargraves brought his news to Sydney: and indeed no British Minister would dare deport criminals to any settlement within easy reach of a goldfield. It was this consideration that hastened the already mentioned decision of Sir John Pakington: at the beginning of 1854 both Tasmania and Norfolk Island ceased to be convict-depôts, and the system lingered on only in West Australia, isolated by deserts and a week of rough seas from the free self-governing colonies of the East.

***Constitution-Making.***—In them, meanwhile, politicians had been busy with the devising of the new Constitutions. The situation had completely altered since they were given the power to do so. The squatting oligarchy was no longer supreme: united against it stood a democracy of townspeople and diggers. The life of the goldfields went far to obliterate class-distinctions: wealth was won either at haphazard or by those sharp-witted enough to provide the lucky digger with the food he needed and the luxuries he desired. It is hardly to be wondered at that the Conservatives of the New South Wales Council, Wentworth at their head, had small hope of the colony's welfare if its Legislature was to be entirely controlled by the new element in politics: they went so far, indeed, knowing that the popularly-elected House would be so controlled, as to recommend the setting up of a colonial peerage by which and out of which the second Chamber should be elected. With this proposal they joined one for a Federal Assembly on lines laid down by the Privy Council Committee in 1849. So the second recommendation unluckily shared the fate of the first, which exposed itself too easily to the jeers of the democratic leaders; and all Wentworth could secure was that the second Chamber should be nominated by the Governor, its first members for five years only, after that for life.

In 1854 three colonies sent home their schemes of self-

government, all very much alike. All provided for two chambers—a "lower House" or Assembly, and an "upper House" or Council. All the Assemblies were elective, a small property qualification entitling to the franchise. New South Wales made its Council nominee: Victoria aud Tasmania preferred elective Councils, the franchise depending on larger property qualifications or on membership of a profession. South Australia took longer to make up its mind, and in 1855 put forward a Constitution of a more democratic type—twy-chambered, certainly, but with an Assembly elected by all adult males, a Council in whose election the whole colony voted as a single constituency, and vote by ballot at all elections. The four schemes were assented to at home, a few minor alterations being made in those of Victoria and New South Wales: and by the beginning of 1856 eastern Australia was beginning to taste the worrying responsibilities of governing itself.

## CHAPTER VI

### *The Political Mechanism*

It will be convenient at this point to summarize the stages through which Australia reached self-government, and the various regulations under which Australian land was divided among the colonists. Both have been more or less touched upon in the foregoing narrative, but the repetition is unavoidable.

### A.—*Systems of Government*

***The Governors.***—The chief—and, of late years, the only—Imperial officials, the Governors, fall at once into four classes. Each original Australasian colony (Victoria and Queensland being sections cut off from New South Wales) began life under a seaman, partly because all were at first sea-coast settlements dependent on sea-communications, partly because the navy was looked upon as the severest school of discipline. The first four Governors of New South Wales were seamen: so were Collins and Davey in Tasmania, Stirling in West and Hindmarsh in South Australia, Hobson and Fitzroy in New Zealand. From them control passed to military men, old Peninsular officers, disciplinarians still, but less severe: and when the growing impatience of the colonists made it wise to pick their rule carefully, a few Governors—Gipps, Grey, Latrobe, Hotham, Denison—were chosen for their special qualifications. As the actual control of affairs passed into local hands, the Governor became a friendly guide of inexperienced Premiers, reporting officially to his department in London, and needed

rather the tact that is born of experience than the innate power of mastering men: so his post was made a departmental one, the holder learning his work in the smaller dependencies (*e.g.* the West Indian islands), and often transferred from one Australian colony to another before returning to England. Thus Sir George Bowen, and Lord Normanby after him, passed from Queensland to New Zealand and thence to Victoria: while Sir Hercules Robinson, who began his career as ruler of Montserrat and St Kitts, came by way of Hongkong and Ceylon to guide the affairs of New South Wales and New Zealand, and learnt through that experience to rule South Africa. This age of "professional" Governors lasted, speaking roughly, till 1885, when with the appointment of Lord Carrington to New South Wales began the present system of providing wealthy peers as Governors, chosen with a view to social rather than to political duties.

***Autocracy.***—Naturally, the first Governors of New South Wales were autocrats, their subjects being either prisoners, officials, or military men, all bound to obey their superiors without question. (We are considering, of course, the theory of the thing: facts have been dealt with already.) The colony came into being—and this had a permanent influence on Australian life—as a State-controlled institution: everything originated from the Government: individual settlers had to get what was practically a "permit" from the authorities before they could do anything, and looked to the same authorities to provide for their wants and buy their produce. State-aid is a corollary of State-control, and Australia has never quite accustomed itself to do without either. Justice, even, was administered by the Governor's nominees—a situation which led directly to the mutiny against Governor Bligh.

***Judicial Developments.***—The independent administration of justice, therefore, was the first limit set to the Governor's autocracy. In 1814 a Supreme Court was set up, in which a judge with legal qualifications, ap-

pointed direct from home, sat with magistrates appointed by the Governor to try civil cases involving £50 and over. The first judges sent out had no sympathy with Macquarie's emancipist proclivities, and their courtfees were too high for most suitors: but their work in spite of all so justified itself that in 1823 the system was further amplified. Tasmania got a Supreme Court of its own; and both Courts were to consist in future of a Chief Justice and two other judges, taking civil cases along with Governor-appointed magistrates, and criminal cases in conjunction with seven military assessors. This was a great improvement on the previous rule by which criminal trials fell to the Judge Advocate (a Governor's nominee) and five military assessors. Moreover, the parties to any civil suit might demand a jury: in 1828 the local Councils were allowed to introduce juries into criminal trials also: and during the thirties Australian Courts and practice were assimilated as much as possible to the mother-country's pattern, English law (statute- and case-), having been established throughout the land by the Act of 1828.

***Legislation.***—Meanwhile the Governor's executive and legislative authority were being a good deal curtailed. The Act of 1823 ordained the setting up of a Legislative Council, which must discuss every ordinance the Governor might wish to make: if Council and Governor disagreed, he did what he wished, but had to report the whole matter, including the Council's opinions, to the Colonial Office. He was more strictly controlled, however, by the Chief Justice, who could veto any ordinance even before the Council saw it, if it was repugnant to English law. This Council at first consisted of seven Colonial Office nominees: it acquired some powers of taxation, and when the colony in 1827 became selfsupporting (except as concerned the penal establishment) it soon gained control of most of the expenditure, though the British Government still fixed the Customs tariff and the Governor retained the Landfund. To make it more adequate to these duties it was in 1828 enlarged to fourteen (seven officials,

seven civilians), and acquired an absolute veto on the Governor's legislation; the Chief Justice's veto being exchanged for a protest from the Bench as a whole, which the Council could override until decision was finally made in London. Bourke commenced the practice of submitting regular estimates to it, and treated it with more cordial respect than his predecessors had done.

Similar nominee Councils were set up in Tasmania at its separation, and later on in West and South Australia. The Governor in all four colonies had also an Executive Council, for advice rather than control, made up of his chief officials: but it is not clear when this institution formally originated or how much it was used before the days of Gipps.

***The Constitution of 1842.***—The beginnings of real freedom came with the Constitution of 1842. This added an elective element to the nominee Council. The Colonial Office, on Gipps' recommendation, nominated six officials and six settlers: the settlers themselves elected twenty-four, Sydney getting two members, Melbourne one, the rest of Port Phillip five, and Moreton Bay a share of one. The new Legislature had full power of lawmaking and control over all expenditure except a fixed Civil list of £81,600 and such disbursements as were made from the Landfund. Moreover, the Governor was no longer a member of it, but had to explain his policy by deputy—a process which, as he was still the real Prime Minister of the colony, was extremely awkward, and tended to embitter the relations between him and the new Council.

A scheme of District Councils was embodied in the Act: to these bodies, which consisted of elected members, the Governor having the right to nominate in default of election, all local roads and bridges and buildings were entrusted, as well as the establishment and management of schools: their funds, levied by rate or toll, were liable for these expenses and for half the police expenditure, though police control remained with the Governor. The scheme was an adaptation

of one already working in Canada, but in Canada there were no convicts, and police-work was far lighter. The Councils came to nothing: and their failure, and the reason of it, so impressed New South Wales that it still lags behind the rest in matters of local government.

***The Act of 1850.***—In 1847 Earl Grey propounded his scheme for giving self-government to Australia. Its central principle was a revival of the District Councils under the name of municipalities, and the election of members of the colonial Legislatures not by the people but by the Councils. The storm of disapproval that followed was only quelled when Grey abandoned his proposal altogether, and appointed the Committee whose work has already been described. The Act of 1850, as has been said, entrusted to the existing Councils the task of devising their own reform: meanwhile it left in their hands the regulation of the Customs tariff, with a few minor reservations. Great Britain, of course, was by now a freetrade nation: but the same tendencies which moved politicians of the mid-century to free our trade from imposts moved them also to free the colonists from the yoke of a tariff-policy which they might not care for.

The progress towards self-government here outlined was that of New South Wales, as being typical of Australia in general. In South Australia the Governor's autocracy was at first hampered by the conjoint powers of a Board of Commissioners in London. With the arrival of Captain Grey, however, the colony passed under the direct supervision of the Colonial Office, and in 1842 a Council of eight (four officials, four civilian nominees) was created to advise the Governor. With Sir Henry Young came in the District Council system of local government: and 1851 brought a partly elected Legislative Council such as New South Wales got in 1842. Tasmania got its nominee Council in 1824, but waited till 1851 for the freer form.

***New Zealand.***—New Zealand in 1840 acquired both an Executive and a nominee Legislative Council. In 1852 it

was given a Constitution of its own, mainly on lines laid down by Sir George Grey and his most trusted advisers. The colony was not—has, perhaps, never yet quite become —homogeneous: it was treated, therefore, as a federation in miniature, and divided into six provinces. Auckland represented the original official settlement: New Plymouth (Taranaki), Wellington and Nelson sprang from the Company's early settlements: Canterbury and Otago were the later ones. Each province elected its own Council and its own Superintendent, and so dealt with local matters. A nominee Council and an elected "House of Representatives" dealt with the affairs of the colony as a whole, and controlled the whole revenue; but were bound to distribute the money not expended for general colonial purposes among the provinces in proportion to their contributions. The Governor was given power to reserve Native Districts out of any province, in which Maori law was to prevail. This constitution lasted till 1875, when the provincial Councils disappeared. In the meanwhile more provinces had been created: Hawke's Bay was carved out of Wellington, and Marlborough out of Nelson: gold discoveries severed Westland from Canterbury, and (for nine years only) Southland from Otago.

***The Constitution of 1855, and its development.*** —The Acts which were proclaimed in Eastern Australia during 1855 and 1856 established the system of government which, with some extensions of the franchise and a few minor alterations, prevailed there till the end of 1900. They set up four selfgoverning colonies—to which a fifth, Queensland, was added in 1859—with constitutions as nearly resembling that of the mother-country as could be devised under the circumstances: it is the differences, therefore, rather than the details of likeness that we should consider.

The Governor of each colony stands for the Queen, exercising his powers mainly on the advice of his Executive Council. He has, however, two additional functions. He

is an official of the Colonial Office, reporting to the Colonial Secretary all matters of Imperial moment: and he is bound to reserve for the Queen's direct assent certain Bills, mostly such as affect the colony's relations with the Empire or foreign nations. Also his assent to other Bills is, theoretically, not final: they may be vetoed within two years of their reaching the Colonial Office—but such a veto is practically obsolete.

The Executive Council is a formal adaptation of our Cabinet. The number of Ministers, and their offices, are fixed by law: otherwise they are chosen under the same conditions as hold good in London. In Victoria the analogy of the Privy Council, overlying that of the Cabinet, has brought it about that ex-Ministers remain nominal members of the Council; but this variation has no practical results. The responsibility of Ministers to Parliament is, as in England, a matter of convenience supported by tradition, and the omission to express it definitely led to some trouble in the first years of New Zealand's selfgovernment. The solidarity of the Ministry is by no means so settled. It is an outgrowth of the party system, and Australian parties are liable to be no more than the Ins and the Outs. Every now and then a question crops up on which the divisions are wellmarked, as did the question of Protection in Victoria during the sixties and more recently in New South Wales; but party lines are not strict, many an Opposition has been left chiefless by the absorption of its leader into the Ministry, and politicians have learnt to be distrustful of each other's motives.

The "Upper House," or Legislative Council, is elective in all the colonies except New Zealand, New South Wales, and Queensland—which, as an offshoot of New South Wales after self-government, took a Constitution of the parent type. The idea behind all of them—the reason of their creation—was the necessity of a check on the possibly too sudden decisions of the popularly-elected Chamber. Three colonies, as aforesaid, strove to compass this by making their Council

a nominee House, to which successive Ministries should appoint members of their own party and so keep the balance even. This procedure has one great advantage, that an obstinate struggle between the two Houses can always be ended by the "swamping" of the Council: while the Governor can veto any undue use of the nominating power, and has done so both in New South Wales and New Zealand. In the colonies with elective Councils the check has been sought for partly by narrowing the franchise of electors and enlarging the constituencies, partly by electing members in batches, one third at a time:. South Australia has superadded an arrangement for preventing deadlocks which allows both Houses to be dissolved simultaneously under certain conditions. In Victoria, Tasmania, and West Australia deadlocks are left to the device of the moment.

The "Lower House," or Legislative Assembly, claims in all cases the powers exercised by the House of Commons, except where the Constitution has specifically ordained otherwise. Thus—to take the most important point—all taxing or appropriation Bills must in every colony be introduced in the Assembly: but while in Victoria the Council is forbidden to amend such Bills, and in all the other colonies but one the same practice has become a tradition, the South Australian Council, whose Constitution implied an amending power, has a compact with the Assembly by which it makes "suggestions" about money Bills which the other House may (and often does) embody as amendments.

The following table shows briefly how the Australian Parliaments come into being.

| | Council. | | | Assembly. | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | How appointed. | For | Members retire. | Franchise. | Duration. | |
| New South Wales. | Nominee . . . | Life. | ... | Manhood Suffrage: one man one vote. | 3 Years. | 125 Electorates return 1 member each. |
| Victoria . . . | Elected: large property qualification for members, small for voters: 14 provinces return 48 members | 6 Years. | 14 every 2nd and 4th year, 20 every 6th year. | Manhood Suffrage: one man one vote, but voters may qualify in several electorates and vote in which he chooses. | 3 Years. | 84 Electorates return 95 members. |
| New Zealand . | Nominee . . . | 7 Years. | ... | Adult Suffrage (including women): one person one vote. | 3 Years. | 62 Electorates return 70 members; Maoris elect 4 more. |
| Queensland . . | Nominee . . . | Life. | ... | Property qualification. | 3 Years. | 60 Electorates return 72 members. |
| South Australia . | Elected by voters (including women) with small property qualification: 4 electorates return 6 members each. | 9 Years. | One third every 3 years. | Adult Suffrage (including women): one person one vote. | 3 Years. | 27 Electorates return 2 members each. |
| Tasmania . . . | Elected by voters with professional, educational, or small property qualification: 16 electorates return 18 members. | 6 Years. | ... | Small property qualification. | 3 Years. | 30 Electorates return 37 members. |
| Western Australia | Elected by voters with property qualification: 8 provinces return 3 members each. | 6 Years. | One third every 2 years. | Small property qualification. | 4 Years. | 44 Electorates return 1 member each. |

## B.—*Land-laws*

***Land-grants.***—The land of New South Wales—that is, during the early years, the County of Cumberland, an area of 915,000 acres—was at first allotted by grant to emancipists in 30-acre blocks, and to officials and free settlers in 100-acre blocks, at a small quit-rent which was soon discontinued, except in the case of town-lands. Macarthur's Camden grant was the first infringement of these rules, and Macquarie, when the colony was enlarged beyond the Blue Mountains, in many cases disregarded them. Town-lands were as a rule leased. Brisbane's Instructions introduced a new system, under which grants were made to free settlers proportionately to the capital expended by them on the land and the number of convicts they took off the Government's hands as "assigned servants." Also land could be sold at five shillings an acre, areas near Sydney being valued at a rather higher price. The result of this freer policy was that, while the naval governors had alienated barely 200,000 acres, and Macquarie just double as much, Brisbane and Darling between them disposed of no less than 3,400,000 acres in eight years. All this land was within the "settled districts"—roughly speaking, the area within a hundred and fifty miles (measured on the map) from Sydney—which had been surveyed by Sir Thomas Mitchell and divided into nineteen counties in pursuance of orders from London received during 1825. A twentieth county (the Port Macquarie district) was added in 1838. Outside these bounds no land could be alienated in any way.

***Land-sales.***—In 1831 a new régime came in, the result of Wakefield's arguments against cheap land acting on the minds of the Reform Ministry. No more land-grants were to be issued. All land was to be sold by auction at a minimum price of five shillings per acre: a would-be settler must first pick the area he required, and then bid for it at a public sale. In 1838 the minimum price was raised to twelve shillings, so as not to undersell South Australia: and in 1840, for the same reason, the Land and Emigration com-

mission insisted that Port Phillip land outside town boundaries should be sold at the fixed price of £1 per acre. Gipps protested against the notion of letting land close to Melbourne go for the same price as country blocks: and the result of his protest was the Crown Lands Sale Act of 1842. This confirmed the division, already made by the 1840 Commission, of the Port Phillip and Moreton Bay districts from the Middle district (the Twenty Counties): insisted that land must be regularly surveyed before sale, not chosen haphazard by the intending buyer: established quarterly auction sales, and fixed a minimum price of £1 cash per acre. An Order-in-Council of 1847 classified areas a little more carefully, but did not otherwise alter sale conditions. The result of these shifting laws reflected itself in the actual sales. Under the law of 1831, alienation went on at the rate of 200,000 acres a year: the higher price of 1838 reduced the yearly average to about 100,000 acres: in the five years 1842-6 it fell to 4000.

***The Squatters.***—All this selling of land did not in any way meet the needs of large stock-owners, and it was on them that the prosperity of the colony really depended. During the time of land-grants some of them had secured areas large enough to depasture their flocks, and one large Company, the Australian Agricultural Company, was given blocks of land that amounted to more than a million acres. When the law of 1831 put a stop to this, the squatters simply moved out beyond the settled districts and let their flocks run free, avoiding collision with each other by mutual forbearance. Bourke condoned this trespass by issuing licenses at a fee of £10 to individual squatters, the fee being rather a guarantee of their law-abidingness than a payment for value received: Gipps added an assessment on the number of stock owned, whose proceeds went to defray the cost of policing the pastoral districts. In 1847 a system of leasing was introduced; the lessee held his land free of disturbance during the term of his lease, and at the end of it could buy what he liked to keep at the fixed price of £1 per acre. Naturally,

the country as a whole being badly watered, the squatter bought the areas immediately surrounding what water there was, and so made the rest of the run untenable by any one else.

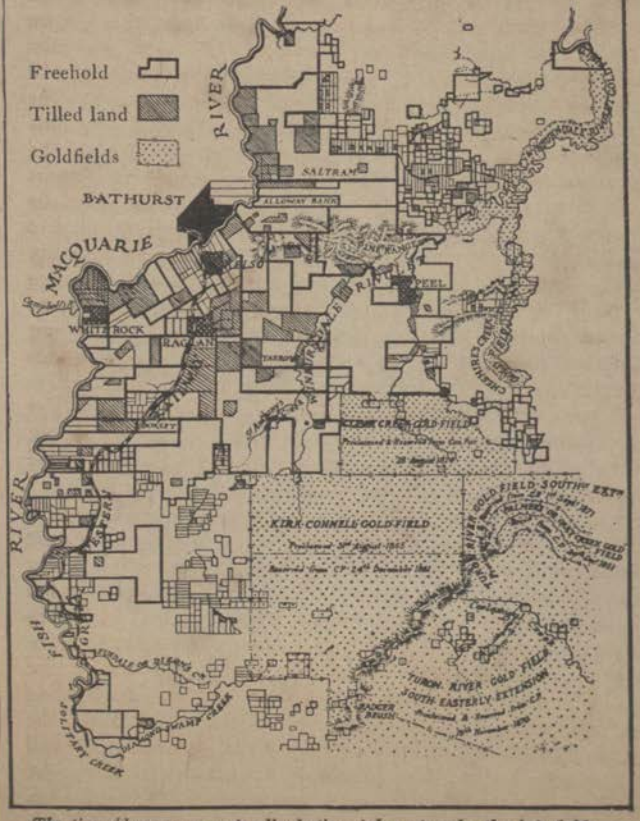
***The Land Fund.***—The proceeds of these transactions —sale, license, or lease—were Imperial, not Colonial, assets. Up till 1827 the British Government paid the general expenses of the colony, and land-sales were a small set-off against this: when the colony had to pay its own expenses, it took objection to losing such a source of revenue. Most of the money, certainly, went to assist immigration,[1] and the rest to public works and uses within the colony; but the Governor, not the Council, was the controlling power. Over this Gipps and Wentworth wrangled, but the Colonial Office stood firm. The control of the Customs tariff was conceded, and the control of the revenue from gold-licenses: the land fund was in 1842 allotted, half to immigration expenses, three-twentieths for the aborigines, the rest for roads and bridges; but all these moneys were kept in the Governor's control, until the Constitutions of 1856 handed everything of local interest over to the local Parliaments.

***West and South Australia.***—In the experimental colonies land was treated differently at first, as the method of its disposal was the crucial point of the experiment in each case: the original methods have therefore been already described. In West Australia the grant system was so badly handled that private owners found themselves with far more land than they could use, and sold the surplus much below the Government's price, of £1 per acre, which had been fixed by the Act of 1842. Hence there were no difficulties about the disposal of the land fund, since it

[1] Half, at least, must be thus expended, by the Act of 1842. Gipps was very anxious to use the whole for this purpose, but disputes with his Council forced him to draw on it repeatedly for other purposes. The colonists' real grievance was that the Governor could always use the Fund to meet expenditure for which the Council refused to make proper provision.

scarcely existed. Tillage and pastoral leases, carrying a right of pre-emption when they terminated, were tried without much success, and it was not till 1873 that Crown lands were taken up in any quantity. In South Australia land was sold from the start—at first at the fixed price of twelve shillings, which was in 1836 raised to £1—but the proceeds were disposed of by the London Board of Commissioners, until the Act of 1842 put this colony on the same footing as the rest. In Robe's time there was a short but bitter quarrel between Governor and Council over the imposition of a royalty on minerals: the Council objected to it, and the Governor's attempt to levy it on his own authority as autocratic in land matters was annulled by the Supreme Court. The needs of squatters were met at first by licenses issued to those who already owned land, each owner being allowed a run on Crown lands sixteen times the size of his freehold. In 1850 an Order-in-Council established a system of leases, differing importantly from that of New South Wales in that any leased land could be resumed for sale at six months' notice, and so making it impossible for a squatter to lock up good land against would-be farmers.

***Squatter and Selector.***—Self-government, therefore, found South Australia ready to meet the wants both of the stock-owning squatter and of the settler who wanted a few acres of good land for tillage. East of 141° matters were not so easily adjusted. In Queensland, it is true, where there was no gold rush till 1858, and then a failure, the squatters were not yet to be interfered with: their domain lay west of the main range, and there was still plenty of room for small farms in the Brisbane valley. But New South Wales found the land-question not at all so simple. The squatters were still a powerful body. The goldfields were scattered about the colony, neighbouring big runs everywhere. The *quondam* miner, looking for land, was exasperated to find how much had already been locked up or made useless by squatters under their pre-emptive rights. After three years' fighting (which included a constitutional crisis) the small settlers—




*The tiny oblongs are nearly all selections taken up under the Act of 1861.*

LAND-GRANTS AND SELECTIONS.

(Bathurst District, N.S.W.).

called "selectors"—triumphed. The Robertson Land Acts of 1861 embodied a principle of "free selection before survey," by virtue of which anyone might take up anywhere on unsold Crown lands a selection not more than half a square mile in area, paying for it by instalments, and living on it and improving it until the sum was paid.[1]

The remedy was too drastic. There were, of course, many genuine selectors; but there were also many who claimed patches of fertile or wellwatered country merely that they might be bought out at a high price by the squatter whose run they were invading; and in selfdefence the squatters induced men in their own employ to select areas necessary to the good working of the station, and so to become "dummies" contravening the intention of the Act. In spite of all these disadvantages (which to this day encumber the Sydney law courts and puzzle the Judicial Committee in London) Robertson's Acts ruled New South Wales till 1885, when squatters were given leases of half their runs without disturbance for a term; and an Act of 1895 introduced a series of complicated tenures, embodying recent tendencies to lease land rather than sell it, and to confine alienation to lands which have previously been surveyed and valued by the Government.

[1] Victoria passed a similar Act in 1862, but the results were less noticeable because the principal stockowners held their stations by grant and in districts remote from the goldfields.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Self-government*

### A.—*Exploration (1843-1861)*

In 1856 the settled districts of Australia were still a very small part of the continent. Victoria was a patch of runs and goldfields between the Gippsland ranges and the mallee country: roughly speaking, Hume's track bounded the settlements on the south-east, and Mitchell's on the north-west. In New South Wales settlers kept within the western edge of the great tableland, and squatters, pushing further out, occupied mainly strips of plain adjacent to the Murray and its tributaries. South Australia was a coastal region, nowhere more than a hundred miles broad, between the Glenelg and the head of Spencer's Gulf. West Australia had farms and sheepruns in the Avon valley, but little else east of the road from Perth to Albany. Behind these partly-populated areas the unknown interior loomed temptingly for those who had not yet made trial of it.

***Leichhardt.***—South Australia, as we have already seen, had made its trial and been rebuffed. West Australia made spasmodic efforts of the same kind, chiefly valuable because they trained A. C. Gregory to explorer's work. But the north-east of the continent was more promising, and still untouched: and in 1843 the New South Wales Council, sore at the impending separation of Port Phillip, determined to assert their ownership of Northern Australia by opening up a cross-country route from Fort Bourke on the Darling to Port Essington. There a military station had been established in 1829, and recent voyages of the *Beagle*, during which Port Darwin and the Flinders and Victoria rivers

were discovered, called attention to the possible value of the northern peninsula. While the official expedition was waiting for permission from London, Ludwig Leichhardt started with a small party from the Darling Downs to reach the same goal by a track parallel with the coast. Keeping about a hundred miles inland, he made north-west to the rough country at the foot of Cape York Peninsula, turned westwards round the shores of the Gulf, and struck across from the Roper to Van Diemen's Gulf: travelling from end to end through wellwatered country, up or down or across rivers worth the name, he won by this single journey considerable fame and reward.

***A Series of Failures.***—Mitchell, meanwhile, started at the end of 1845 with the official overland expedition; but, bearing too much north and even north-east, crossed first of all the watershed between the Darling basin and the coastal rivers, then the ridge further west between the Darling and the upper course of Cooper's Creek—hoping each time that he was at last on waters that flowed to the northern sea—and came back to Sydney with his task still undone. His second-in-command, Kennedy, proved his error next year, but was killed two years later when in command of a party exploring Cape York Peninsula. Leichhardt, after two futile attempts, got away again in 1848 on a journey that was to take him right across Australia from east to west: started across the country through which a railway now runs to Charleville: and disappeared utterly, he and his men and his cattle, so that no trace of them has ever been found.

***Gregory, and Stuart.***—It was not till 1855 that public feeling was seriously aroused about Leichhardt's fate. Then A. C. Gregory was put in command of an expedition which was to work inland from the mouth of the Victoria River; the river led him south to Sturt's Creek, and that south-west into salt-lake country, so he turned back after six hundred miles and travelled east, parallel with Leichhardt's first trail, to the Darling Downs. From there in 1858 he started again south-west, still looking for the lost explorer,

and came out among the lakes of South Australia, which his journey and some simultaneous explorations by local men showed to be discontinuous and surrounded by fair pastoral country. This roused the colonists to new endeavours, and especially encouraged John M'Douall Stuart, an old comrade of Sturt's, and an even more indefatigable explorer. After two years' work west of Lake Eyre he, in 1860, made directly across the continent northwards. That year he reached 19° S., and was turned back by the hostility of a native tribe. Next year, helped by the Colonial Government, he made two degrees more northing, and was stopped by impenetrable scrub towards the Victoria River. In 1862, after another fruitless attempt to pass the scrub, he kept away due north on to the Strangways, and so across a tableland to Van Diemen's Gulf; but the triumph of his return was marred by much suffering—he, like his old leader, spent his strength and broke his spirit on the wastes of his adopted country.

***Burke and Wills.***—Stuart's achievement was fine and of permanent value—for it is along his track that the overland telegraph line now runs from Adelaide to Port Darwin: but, technically speaking, he was not the first man to cross Australia. In 1857 the Philosophical Institute (which is now the Royal Society) of Victoria planned a great transcontinental expedition on Leichhardt's line: and, thinking a second time, decided to begin by establishing a *depôt* on Cooper's Creek from which exploring parties might work more comfortably. For reasons never thoroughly explained, the command of this expedition was given to Richard Burke, an inspector of police, whose bravery was his only qualification for the post: W. J. Wills was the scientific expert, and soon became second-in-command. The party was very fully equipped, but Burke left the main body at Menindie on the lower Darling to come on more slowly, and pushed on to Cooper's Creek with only seven men. A month's wait there made him so impatient that he started again, on his own initiative and against instructions, to reach the Gulf, taking with him Wills and two others. In less than two months

they were on tidal waters near the mouth of the Flinders, but could not see the sea for mangroves: they turned back, on short rations over rain-clogged country, and reached the *dépôt* not ten hours after its occupants had left to rejoin the main body. Wills wanted to follow them. Burke insisted on making for the nearest South Australian cattle-stations, a hundred and fifty miles off. They struggled down Cooper's Creek a little way, found the plan hopeless and tried to return. But they were starving, could not keep up their strength on the nardoo [1] some blacks gave them, and were too inexperienced bushmen to find food for themselves. Wills died alone in the desert: Burke died in the night while his companion slept: one man survived, kept three months by the natives, to tell the story of failure and death.

***The Relief Expeditions.***—Meanwhile the leader of the main body reached the *depôt*, found no trace of the explorers, and returned to the settled districts to report their disappearance. At once relief-parties were organized, one going by the already-used road to Cooper's Creek, the others making towards the same goal from Adelaide, Rockhampton, and the Gulf. The first found the survivor, and brought back the bodies of Burke and Wills to Melbourne: the others on their way thoroughly explored the river basins of the Gulf country and the Diamantina, and so added to a new colony some of its richest pastoral districts.

## B.—*Dividing the Spoil*

For by this time there were five colonies on the Australian mainland. The Land Commission of 1840, that first suggested the separation of Port Phillip, also foreshadowed the cutting off of the Moreton Bay district: and the idea gradually took shape in the Colonial Office as a scheme for giving local independence to a strip of territory between 26° S. and 30°

[1] A cryptogam (*Marsilea*) that grows in swampy ground The part used for food is the spore-case, which is pounded to a kind of flour.

S. running from the South Australian border to the sea. On the map this looked well, all the waste lands north of 26° S. being thus left under Imperial control; and the Port Curtis penal settlement already referred to was to be the beginning of a more systematic occupation of these northern regions. Port Curtis, however, was abandoned as unsuitable, and soon the Moreton Bay district began to talk of wider bounds than the Colonial Office desired to allow it. In the valley of the Brisbane John Dunmore Lang had planted some hundreds of immigrants of the better class. He was much of a firebrand in New South Wales, but his work greatly aided the separation of Victoria, and his zeal for the free colonization of the north was indubitable and effective. Behind the main range squatters held the Darling Downs and eagerly drove their herds along the tracks of Mitchell and Leichhardt. Their connection was rather with Sydney than with Brisbane, and their great need was cheap labour—not excluding convicts. However, after much negotiation, they were induced to fall in line with the farmers and townspeople of the coast, and separation became a matter of practical politics. The Colonial Office's boundaries were considerably altered: 30° S. cut off from New South Wales some of its best coast-country, and by Governor Denison's advice a natural boundary of rugged hill-country was substituted for it, merging westwards into the line of 29° S. This made 26° S. too close for a northern limit: and colonists had still a vague dread of some new Port Curtis scheme, though the British Ministry gave definite promises that convictism was done with: so in the end the whole northern country was included in the new province, the line of 141° E. continued to the Gulf for its western boundary, and the colony of Queensland came into being at the end of 1859.

***The Northern Territory.***—This left New South Wales curiously shaped: for while the colony proper was now shut in all round, there was a vast area west of Queensland and north of South Australia still belonging to it, to say nothing of a strip running down to the

Bight between 129° E. and 132° E. The strip was disposed of in 1861 by adding it to South Australia so that this province shared its western boundary with West Australia: the northern lands were more valuable. Queensland found that 141° E. cut off from it the best of the Gulf country, the "Plains of Promise," and begged for an extension of its limits, suggesting that a new colony be made out of the remaining area and part of West Australia. The Colonial Office was willing, but Adelaide was not. South Australians had crossed the continent there, and they had no mind to let Stuart's discoveries fall into other hands. There was much arguing and bargaining, and in 1863 matters were settled finally. Queensland took its boundary across the top of South Australia to 138° E.: South Australia got the use of the Northern Territory till further notice: and West Australia remained intact.

## C.—*The South-eastern Colonies, 1856-1894*

***Kaleidoscopic politics.***—The political history of the first thirty years of selfgovernment in Australia is a tangle which requires volumes to unwind it properly, and a chronological summary of it is impossible. Nothing else could be expected from the introduction of party government into countries where there were no real parties. The question of the day, whatever it might be, divided Ministers from Oppositions: and while it was occasionally an important one, fiscal or constitutional, it was frequently a matter of mere departmental detail. In New South Wales, one of the least capricious of the colonies in this respect, eighteen Ministries held office within twenty-two and a half years: then came a coalition Ministry of four years' duration, and one kept nearly three years in office to pass a much needed Land Act: five more were crowded into the next three years, and then the fickleness of partisans was steadied into supporting two more for nearly three years each. That is to say, for

thirty-eight years (1856-94) the average duration of Ministries was seventeen months. South Australia's average for about the same time was ten months only.

In New South Wales what continuous party spirit there was seems to have acted for a long time along the line of town *versus* country. The country interests were represented by Charles Cowper and John Robertson, both squatters: the townsfolk supported James Martin, lawyer and afterwards Chief Justice, and Henry Parkes, who fought his way from labourer and artisan to the Premiership and a record of a good national work second only to Wentworth's. It was a Robertson-Cowper Ministry that passed the Land Acts of 1861, and a Robertson Ministry that amended them in 1875; it was a Martin Ministry that in 1864 attempted to bring in Protection, and Parkes was Colonial Secretary of another when he in 1866 carried through a valuable Education Act. This distinction, however, must not be too definitely insisted on. Parkes angered the townsfolk by his belief in assisted immigration, and his first Ministry was opposed by a Martin-Robertson coalition.

The Land Acts of 1861 provided New South Wales with its constitutional crisis. Robertson, though a squatter, shaped his legislation in the interests of selectors, and the Council—still representing the squatter-party so powerful before 1851—introduced amendments which would preserve leased runs undisturbed. The Ministry thereupon persuaded the Governor, Sir John Young, to "swamp" the Council by appointing twenty-one new members. But the Council had, under the Constitution Act, been nominated for five years only: and that Act also provided that, if no other arrangements had been made during those years, members nominated thereafter should be Councillors for life. The twenty-one "swampers" came to the old Council's last meeting to be sworn in; the old members immediately walked out and left no quorum to see them sworn in: the disputed Bills therefore lapsed, and nothing could be done till the new Council was nominated. It was easy to appoint a new one favourable to

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the Bills, but Ministers were sensible enough not to carry things with so high a hand. Wentworth, who had been away in England, was called in to consultation, and made President of the new body: his fellow-members were nominated on his advice for their real value as Councillors, and on his advice agreed to accept the Bills with very little alteration, and the crisis passed.

After that New South Wales had comparative peace until Henry Parkes and John Robertson in 1872 entered on a five years' struggle that did not much hinder, or advance, the colony's progress. In 1878 the two joined forces, and during a four years' tenure of office reconstructed the electoral and educational systems. The first elections under the new Act made it clear that a new political era was beginning: hardly one of the names well known in 1856 was left on the members' roll, and among the new names were those of men who are now the leaders of New South Wales politics. It was significant, too, that the coalition Ministry was defeated on an amending Land Bill brought in by Robertson, and the new Premier, Alexander Stuart, was an avowed opponent of the "selection before survey" principle: while during the next ten years real parties began to shape themselves round the practically new issue of Free-trade *versus* Protection. More striking still, and perhaps more important, was the emergence of a third party, organized and disciplined as was the Irish Party at Westminster in 1885-6, and ready like it to support either of the other two in return for concessions to its own ideas of legislation. This was the Labour Party, pledged to develop to the uttermost the doctrines of majority-rule and State control of industries. Its members decide among themselves whether or no they will support a particular Ministry, and, having so decided, give a unanimous vote regardless of their personal opinions on the question in debate: and so, carrying the party system to its logical conclusion, have at least given the New South Wales Assembly a steadiness which it lacked, and have transformed it from a collection of groups such as constitute

the French Chamber into something more nearly resembling the British House of Commons.

***Victorian politics.***—In Victoria Assembly and Council quarrelled more often and more bitterly, for the causes of quarrel were more lasting—Protection in the sixties, in the seventies Payment of Members.[1] In each case the Assembly was for the innovation, the Council against it: in each case the Ministry "tacked" the obnoxious clauses to an Appropriation Bill, which by the Constitution Act the Council could reject but not amend. Rejection of the Bill meant that no money could be paid on account of the public service, and it was hoped the Council would not push its opposition so far as to make the colony practically bankrupt. In both cases, however, the Council stood by its guns, and the Ministry had to try extreme measures. James M'Culloch, the Premier in 1865, evaded the lack of an Appropriation Act by borrowing money from a bank, paying the Government's debts with that, and letting the bank recover judgment against him in the Supreme Court: he had meanwhile collected duties under his Protectionist tariff, and could use that money to satisfy the Supreme Court judgment without any authorization from Parliament. This scheme was only possible with the Governor's assent: Sir Charles Darling, the then Governor, gave it, thereby making himself a partisan, and was recalled in consequence by the British Government. When the M'Culloch Ministry tried "tacking" again, the new Governor would not help them and the Supreme Court was no longer on their side.

***"Black Wednesday."***—Graham Berry's Ministry, therefore, when in 1877 the Council threw out its "tacked" Appropriation Bill, took a more stringent course. One Wednesday morning a large number of permanent officials (heads of departments, County Court Judges, and police-magistrates among them) came down to work as usual and found their services had been dispensed with, ostensibly

[1] This fight had been going on since 1861, but became most bitter in 1877

because the money for their salaries had not been provided. It was said that friends of Councillors were specially singled out, and were replaced later on by friends of Ministers. Neither this, however, nor Governor Bowen's open backing of the Ministry, availed against the Council's determination: it allowed a temporary Payment of Members Bill to go through (as it had been doing for some years), Sir George Bowen was recalled as Sir Charles Darling had been, and no more was heard of "tacking." Graham Berry made several desperate attempts to do away with the Upper House's power, even coming to England to beg for Imperial intervention with that intent. But the British Government naturally declined to interfere as a partisan in the local affairs of a self-governing colony, and in the end Victoria grew tired of these bickerings and settled down to seven years' quiet—and unscrutinized borrowing—under a coalition.

Victorian Ministries, till in the later seventies James Service and Graham Berry stood out as opponents, corresponded even less to any defined party-system than did those of the mother-colony. Two points stand out prominently in their history: the finely democratic, but rigid and almost *doctrinaire* figure of George Higinbotham, just too rigid to have the influence he deserved among a young and excitable people—and the strong Irish element in successive Ministries (possibly the source of their eagerness for fight), to which bear witness the names of O'Shanassy, and Gavan Duffy, and O'Loghlen, and Peter Lalor who had been in command behind the stockade at Eureka.

***Material Progress.***—While their representatives battled in the Assemblies, the colonists throve and multiplied. New goldfields were opened up, in Victoria east and west along the main range, in New South Wales lower down where the tableland merges in the western plains. The plains themselves disclosed riches of another kind, copper east of the Darling, west of it opal and the silver of Broken Hill. As the squatters moved out back, their place was taken by small holders tilling the soil; in some districts, notably the Riverina,

that lies between Murray and Murrumbidgee, the runs are being gradually transformed into farms under a half-share agreement between owner and cultivator. By 1885 the Victorian Goulburn watered a land of orchards, and Gippsland more recently found room for fruit-trees and hop-vines in its thickly timbered gullies. Towards these new centres of mining or farming State railways were pushed out—long trunk lines from Sydney or Melbourne with shorter "cockspurs" branching off them at all angles in search of traffic: and Victoria (which had never forgiven the altered boundary of 1840) strove, by tapping the Murray at several points and lowering its rates to wool brought from New South Wales stations by river or road, to retain the trade of the Riverina even if it had lost the territory.

***The Bushrangers.***—One feature of this prosperity must be noticed. It was due to the sporadic nature of settlement in both colonies, and is happily now done away with: while it lasted it gave to life touches of romance and realities of bloodshed in which Australia was otherwise lacking. The convict system had produced "bushrangers," escapees who, living of necessity in the bush to avoid re-arrest and punishment, robbed lonely huts to procure themselves food; and sometimes, knowing that every free man's hand was against them, dared bolder and more brutal crimes with the savagery of despair.

The goldfields created a new type of bushranger. Mining townships sprang up in far-away gulllies, connected with the existing settlements and main roads by rough tracks over rougher country: along those tracks went week by week the Government gold-escort with its convoy of great wealth in portable form. Robbery now became the bushranger's leading motive, but he wished to steal two things only—gold, the handiest form of wealth; and horses, on which to carry it and to outrace the pursuing police. He was, therefore, the enemy of diggers and traders and of squatters, but not of the selector-farmer or of poor people. It was indeed from the sons of selectors that the bushranger gangs were

recruited, and on their homesteads that they obtained shelter and food: the police found themselves no longer the rescuers of a district from an outlaw's brutality, but the hunters of men to whose illgotten wealth the district owed many of its comforts. In a small way they anticipated the position of the British troops now struggling in South Africa against evasive and ubiquitous Boer commandos. The history of Gardiner's or Ben Hall's gang has a striking resemblance to that of Christian de Wet.

The situation might have been prolonged for years, had not the bushrangers taken to murder. While they robbed, they were safe; when they began to shoot men in cold blood, the price that was on their heads soon had to be paid. Most of them were shot, fighting or flying; a few were caught and hung; and railways, and the spread of more civilized settlement along the routes they had haunted, destroyed the conditions under which they had become possible.

***Tasmania.***—The story of Tasmania during these years is one of long-continuing depression and perseverance that continued longer still. Victoria offered not only markets for its fruit and timber, but better openings for the industry of its young men than they could find in the island itself. In twenty years (1850-70) while the nearer mainland colonies were more than quadrupling their population, Tasmania advanced only from 70,000 to 100,000. Mines, though ardently sought for, remained hidden till 1871, when the stubborn courage of a prospector was rewarded with the discovery of tin at Mount Bischoff: for in the island, too, minerals are a product of the hill-country, and the Tasmanian ranges are more than usually rugged and beset with scarcely penetrable scrub. Farming was a matter of similar difficulty, for the open central lands were taken for sheepruns, and every selection must be hewn out of the forest—the Tasmanian blue gum being one of the world's big trees. Tin, however, and the discoveries of gold and silver that soon followed, and the spread of railways consequent on this

reviving enterprise, brought prosperity nearer, till the ruinous year of 1893 impoverished mainland and island alike.

## D.—*The Emptier Colonies*

***South Australia.***—In South Australia and Queensland the political history of these years is of minor importance: the immediately pressing problems concerned the utilization of huge territories on which the actual settlements were a mere fringe. South Australia was able, incidentally, to confer two great benefits on Australia as a whole. The first was an Act, passed in 1858, providing for the registration of landed property and all transactions in connection with it, the Government guaranteeing an indefeasible title to the registered owner. In regions where no title could reach back seventy years this system facilitated transfer considerably, and the name of its deviser, R. R. Torrens, has been attached to similar Acts and systems in the other Australian colonies, while a "Torrens title" is the favourite form of land-ownership. The other matter concerned communications with Europe. There was a project for connecting Australia with India, and so Europe, by a submarine cable passing through Malaysia; and the only point of the northern coast from which settlements stretched in a not too broken line to the south-eastern colonies was in Queensland on the Gulf of Carpentaria. Queensland accordingly bethought itself of putting up an overland line to make the required connection, but South Australia forestalled its neighbour by beginning work in 1870 on both ends of a line from Port Darwin to Adelaide. The country was absolutely unknown, except for Stuart's journey: both food for the labourers and timber for the poles had to be imported, and the climate was almost unbearably hot: but in two years and a half the sixteen-hundred-mile-line was completed, at a cost of over £300 a mile, by a colony of barely 190,000 people. By 1877 a similar line, twelve hundred miles long, was made between Adelaide and the West Australian border for only £55 per mile.

***The Northern Territory.***—Three times already, at three different places, had the British Government tried to make a settlement in Northern Australia, and every attempt failed. South Australia, on acquiring the territory, added another failure to the list, and only in 1870 hit upon the harbour of Port Darwin, on which Palmerston now stands. Here was fixed the terminus of the overland telegraph line, and from here in 1883 was made the beginning of a trans-continental railway, that has crept a hundred and fifty miles south to meet, some day, the line coming north past Lake Eyre from Adelaide. Meanwhile the settlement has prospered slowly. It has goldfields of moderate richness: its uplands breed good horses for India. But its tropical industries were long neglected, because the white settlers had very little knowledge of tropical farming and were—as they still are—jealous of immigrant alien races who to some extent supplied the knowledge and the necessary labour. This difficulty may be disposed of by the importation of coolies from India: but the keen desire for a "white Australia" that is evident among the mass of Australians is likely to hamper the development of the intra-tropic territories. The sacrifice, one thinks, is worth making.

***Queensland.***—The record of Queensland is mainly one of material progress. Receiving at once separate existence and selfgovernment, it was taught the alphabet of politics quietly by its first Governor, Sir George Bowen, and the Premier sent from England to help him, R. G. W. Herbert. When he retired in 1866, there was the usual succession of short semi-partisan Ministries, until Queensland began to find its party-distinction in disputes about Kanaka labour and landgrant railways, and Thomas M'Ilwraith and Samuel Griffith divided fourteen years of fighting Premierships between them. The young colony made up for its mild politics by great enthusiasm in developing its territories. The coastal districts were opened up for tropical culture, of cotton more particularly, which was scarce during the American Civil War: squatters occupied the Gulf country: the

Government assisted immigration on a large scale, and borrowed heavily to construct railways and other public works. Such prosperity was fictitious, and the European commercial crisis of 1866 was reflected in Brisbane with deplorable results. At the worst, in 1867, a rich goldfield was discovered at Gympie: the main range was soon alive with prospectors, and the opening up of the Charters Towers field in 1872 assured permanence to the gold industry. From that day to this Queensland has made constantly new discoveries of mineral wealth—not only of the golden hill at Mount Morgan and the alluvial treasures of the Palmer, but of tin and copper and silver, such as make the district behind Cairns to the Gilbert River one of the richest areas in Australia.

***Sugar and Kanakas.***—Nor was it with goldfinds only that the ruin of 1867 was remedied. Sugar plantations in 1865 began to dot the coastlands from Hervey Bay northwards, and Robert Towns (the eponymous hero of Townsville) conceived the idea of making his estate pay by working it with the labour of South Sea islanders—Kanakas, Australia calls them generically, a possible corruption of *ta-ngata*, the South Sea word for "man." He had been an island trader, and used his own vessels to recruit labourers, attracting them with the promise of good clothes and war material to take home at the end of their term. Fellow-planters followed his example. A traffic in Kanakas sprang up among the islands of Melanesia: some of the recruiting agents cared little how they got the natives on board, and the annals of "blackbirding" are plentifully strewn with tales of treachery and massacre. The Queensland Government tried to control the traffic, but without much result: in a large colony with a small scattered population the best of laws cannot be effectively administered throughout. Presently, however, a movement to suppress recruiting altogether, begun out of pure humanity, gained allies among those who wished to keep up wages (which Kanaka competition lowered) and to prohibit all non-white immigration:

Thomas M'Ilwraith and his squatter-planter party were succeeded in 1883 by a strong "democratic" Ministry under Samuel Griffith, and a date was fixed after which no more islanders would be admitted into the colony. This remedy, however, was found too stringent, and the labour traffic was again permitted under more severe rules than before. Since thence it has ceased to be in any way a party matter. But among the after-effects of the agitation is the most serious of all local problems, that of Separation. The principal sugar districts are on the central coast from Hervey Bay north to Mackay: against their interests—as they thought—were combined the farmers and townspeople of the Moreton district (the Queensland "home counties," so to speak) and the miners and stockmen of the far north. So, though the immediate cause of irritation is gone, Separationists are still anxious for a triple division of the colony—south, round and behind the present capital: central, converging on Rockhampton: north, a region of minerals in the ranges behind Townsville and Cairns, and of spreading cattle-stations round the Gulf. And the northerners at least have hopes of success: for, after all, that Brisbane should administer the affairs of Cooktown is as if from Gibraltar we governed Belgium.

***West Australia.***—While the other colonies were stretching their limbs and trying their muscles, West Australia slept quietly in her far corner of the continent, untouched for years by gold fever or party strife. Perth lay out of the track of vessels bound for the eastern cities: they might touch at Albany, but the way thence to the capital was in a coaster over rough seas or by a crawling coach through sand and over boulders. Transports brought to Fremantle a supply of convicts who under Governor Hampton were employed on profitable public works: the country got better roads, the settlers cheap labour, and there seemed no reason for change. But the eastern colonies could not be happy while any part of Australia remained a convict-settlement: the M'Culloch Ministry in Victoria proposed to

cut off intercourse with the offending colony, but was backed only by South Australia—Adelaide and Melbourne being the first ports at which escapees or ex-convicts could land after leaving Albany. However the British Government had its own reasons for wishing to end the system, as good country was being opened up for settlement on the north-west coast, and it was scarcely advisable to let convicts be taken so far away from the centre of control. At the end of 1864, therefore, news came from London that transportation would last only three years longer, and in 1868 the system was ended.

The West Australians were somewhat dismayed, but took consolation from the grant in 1870 of a Council such as New South Wales received in 1842. Also they began to explore more systematically their huge backlands, but with little encouragement. John Forrest in 1870 found a belt of good grass country along the Bight, a little inland from the coast: it is a marked feature of the colony that both on the south and on the north-west such belts occur, edged both coastwards and inland by desolate wastes. But a series of cross-country expeditions to or from the South Australian telegraph line went to show the barrenness of the interior, until another Forrest in 1879 reported fine pastures on the upper Fitzroy, far north. At the back of these gold was discovered in 1882, and the hope of such rapid prosperity as goldfields have always brought stirred the colonists to make "effective occupation"—as the African phrase runs—of their whole area. They had already begun to demand selfgovernment: and while in 1878 the Imperial Government saw no reason to give one-third of Australia into the control of the Perth-Albany district, in 1887 the transaction seemed less over-generous, seeing that there was a proclaimed goldfield at Kimberley and hopes of one at Yilgarn, 250 miles inland from Perth. All Australia backed the Perth petition, and in 1890 its prayer was granted. As if to justify the grant of selfgovernment, the next three years saw the gold discoveries at Cue and Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, and the population

trebled. Railways were thrust out across the desert to these new centres, some built by the Government, some by private companies on the land grant system. The mining element of the population is transforming Perth politics as it transformed those of New South Wales in the fifties, though the transformation is perhaps more abrupt and vehement because the preponderance of the farming interest was so long undisturbed.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Self-government* (*continued*)

### A.—*New Zealand*

When the Constitution of 1852 became law Grey felt his work was complete, and returned to England before the first Parliament of New Zealand met at Auckland.[1] His immediate successor was simply an acting-Governor who did not feel strong enough to alter the existing system, by which the Governor chose his own Ministry, to that by which the Premier is really chosen by the Assembly. It happened also that in the new Constitution Maori matters were still kept under Imperial control: and the friction produced by these two grievances led to a good deal of strained political feeling during the next ten years. Colonel Gore Browne, too, the next Governor, was scarcely a tactful man, and, while he fully accepted the new parliamentary system so far as the colonists were concerned, managed to irritate both colonists and Maoris by his handling of the land question.

***The "King" movement, and second Maori war.***—The immediate result was a great league of Maori chiefs, that refused to part with any more land, and sought for strength by uniting under an elected King. They stood by the treaty of Waitangi still. Their King was not to be an independent monarch, but rather a Governor to represent Maori interests as the English Governor represented the whites. Their first choice, indeed, was an old chief who had stood by the English for many years. Browne, unfortunately, misliked the movement, and suspected intentions

[1] Auckland was the capital till 1865, when the growing influence of the southern provinces transferred that dignity to Wellington.

Cape Maria van Diemen
Bay of Islands
Whangaroa
Hokianga
Kaipara
Auckland
Manukau Har.
Waitemata
Bay of Plenty
Tauranga
Kawhia Har.
AUCKLAND
NORTH
Taranaki
Mt. Egmont
Lake Taupo
Poverty Bay
Napier
Hawke Bay
HAWKE BAY
Patea
Wanganui
ISLAND
WELLINGTON
COOK
Wellington
Nelson
Westport
Nicholson
Kaikoura
Hokitika
SOUTH
ISLAND
Kaiapoi
Christchurch
Banks Peninsula
Akaroa
WEST LAND
CANTERBURY
NELSON
Oamaru
OTAGO
Otago Harbour
Dunedin
NEW
ZEALAND

of revolt where there were none. Meanwhile the refusal to sell land was hampering settlement, and Browne in 1859 went down to Taranaki to arrange a purchase from a minor chief: Wiremu Kingi, the supreme chief of the district, forbade the sale (as he had a perfect right to do); when Browne smelt more rebellion, used force to occupy the disputed land, and proclaimed martial law throughout Taranaki, Wiremu Kingi accepted the challenge, joined the King movement, and called on its leaders to give him help. War began at once. The Maoris were thoroughly in their element: "martial law," translated into their language, became simply "the law of fighting," so that—as they understood it—fighting was now ordered in the Taranaki district: and the warriors of the Waikato, leaving the whites on their own border in peace, marched down to Kingi's aid with alacrity and good humour. The British General Pratt moved his troops slowly in close order, and attacked pas as if they were fortresses: his foemen criticized him, chaffed him, expostulated with him—they did not find the game at all interesting as he played it. The war began to dribble out. The King leaders offered to stop it at any time on condition the Waitara grievance was put straight, but Browne still misunderstood.

***Grey's second Governorship.***—At this juncture Sir George Grey came back, summoned hastily from South Africa as the one man whom the Maoris trusted. For eighteen months he worked hard for peace, enquiring into the Waitara matter, offering the chiefs a local self-government scheme to be worked by themselves in Maori territories, conciliating the colonists by persuading the British Government to put native affairs under colonial control. The King movement, however, he did not like at all. His old friend was dead, and the son, the new king Tawhiao, was a known malcontent. Grey tried to break up the league, and made a military road to the Waikato borders in case of need; meanwhile he arranged to give back the Waitara block, resuming at the same time a block that was British property

seized by some Maoris during the war. And it so fell out, by reason of office-delays, that the resumption took effect first.

That spoilt everything. The natives, who had been for some years keenly suspicious of every white man, now lost faith in Grey. He had broken his promise: he, also, was a landstealer: he was intriguing against their King: he was preparing a road for their invasion. There was no playing this time. The Taranaki war broke out again; all white men were expelled from the Waikato, and the King leaders planned a march on Auckland. The conduct of the war belonged to General Cameron, who led his troops steadily up the Waikato River, storming every pa on his way —sometimes, as at Rangiriri, only with great loss and after several failures. In six months he fought his way sixty miles along the river, and there stayed his march, satisfied to have driven the most powerful of Maori tribes from its open lowlands into the shelter of the central range.

"*Aké, aké, aké!*"—The last incident of that fighting will live in the memory of New Zealanders as long as Britons remember Trafalgar. Rewi the chief made his stand at Orakau near the upper Waipa, hemmed in with three hundred of his tribe behind a hastily built stockade. They had no water, almost no food. Three assaults were flung back: then for two days the pa was battered with shell, and breached at last with a flying sap. Carey, the British officer in command, called to them that he would spare their lives: "We have seen your courage" he said, "let the fighting stop." Rewi climbed the breastwork. "Thus answers the Maori: we fight on." Carey begged him, if he was bent on dying, to send out the women and children. "Who is going to die?" he answered; "the women fight too." Carey made one more appeal, but Rewi was unmoved. "This is our last word" he cried—"*Ka whawhai tonu, aké, aké, aké!* We fight to the end, for ever, for ever, for ever." Then, banding themselves together and shouting the warsong of their ancestors, the besieged broke suddenly through the English

line on the far side of the pa and, setting women and children in the middle, marched for the shelter of the forest. Barely a third of their number reached it, so fierce was the fight for six miles, so deadly the sabres of the pursuing cavalry. With that fight war in the Waikato came to an end: but the fierce warcry of Orakau is the undying word for all New Zealand.

***The Gate Pa.***—There was an echo of the war in Tauranga on the Bay of Plenty, where Cameron found it necessary to storm the "Gate Pa." Its stockade was broken down and the troops crowded in; but the defenders, firing from hidden rifle-pits and charging desperately when they found their retreat cut off, made panic among the British and drove them out again with great loss. The defeat was only momentary, however; six weeks later the same troops swept the Te Ranga rifle-pits clean with the bayonet, and such tribesmen as still refused to surrender betook themselves to their hill-fastnesses.

***The Hau-haus.***—Now Taranaki developed a more cruel form of war, in an outbreak of religious fanaticism. The Hau-hau sect revived cannibalism and the worst of their ancestors' savagery, made for themselves a god out of crude notions of the archangel Gabriel, and went boldly to battle with shouts of "Hau! Hau!" in his honour, hoping for invulnerability thereby. They were soon driven from their first holds, and the King tribes would have nothing to do with them, but their envoys stirred trouble in coast-lands as yet untouched by war. In the Bay of Plenty eastwards tribes friendly to the British dealt with the intruders, aided by colonist volunteers: round Wanganui, too, it was friendly Maoris who bore the brunt of fighting, while Cameron moved his troops to and fro undecidedly. The truth is, he was tired of fighting men so brave and stubborn, who seemed to him to be after all contending for land that was theirs of right. The colonists in his eyes, and (as he well knew) in the eyes of many philanthropic Englishmen, were landgrabbers: why should he waste good soldiers to appease their inordinate hunger?

He did not trouble to understand that this new campaign was against the barbarities of Hauhauism: he kept his men inactive, and would not even attack the Wereroa pa, the key of the rebels' position. Grey expostulated, and argued, and at last took the field himself with about five hundred volunteers, white and Maori: in two days Wereroa was captured without the loss of a single volunteer, and the campaign was over.

***Te Kooti.***—There was, however, yet another recrudescence of Hauhauism to come, though not in Grey's time. In 1868 a Hauhau prisoner, Te Kooti by name, escaped from confinement on the Chatham Islands, seized a ship, and brought his fellowprisoners back to New Zealand. Before he could be hunted down, he fell on a little village at Poverty Bay and slaughtered seventy of its inhabitants, white and Maori together. Whites and Maoris accordingly combined against him, and a joint force of volunteers stormed his fort at Ngatapa, a triply entrenched peak in thick forest with every approach guarded by precipices. Then the victors hunted him up and down among the ranges round Taupo; at last Tawhiao gave him shelter in the King country, and the weary Government stipulated only that he should be kept from doing more mischief.

***Troubled politics.***—Grey had for some time found himself in a position not unlike that of Gipps in the forties,—bound to represent the colonists' views to the Colonial Office and the British Ministry's opinions to New Zealanders, and so to displease both sides. In this case matters were complicated by the mutual jealousy of the provinces. The stress of war fell upon the Auckland province, always identified with Imperial control; Otago and Canterbury, which had leapt to sudden wealth with the gold-discoveries of 1861 (in the Clutha valley) and 1864 (near Hokitika), were not anxious to spend their money on fighting that concerned them not at all. They called for separation: Auckland echoed the call, because their majority in the General Assembly bound her with laws not to her liking.

All parties combined to attack the management of the successive campaigns. New Zealand was paying, they said, and paying exorbitantly, for an army unskilled in bush-fighting and too proud to take advice. If London insisted on entire control of the fighting, let London pay for it: if New Zealand must pay, the troops should be used in accordance with local wishes and local knowledge. In London, meanwhile, Ministers' one desire was to withdraw the regiments as soon as possible and leave the colony to its own devices. Nothing but Grey's personality held the jarring elements in union, and his task was all the harder because he could not thoroughly sympathize with any of the contending parties. The provinces were his creation, and he held them necessary: yet he knew that such separation as they demanded would ruin New Zealand. The war, as General Cameron managed it, was chafing without subduing the finest among his Maori friends: yet unchecked colonial control, he began to see, might drive them into absolute irreconcileability.

His capture of Wereroa at any rate ended active warfare, and he with the Weld and Stafford Ministries had time to consider a permanent settlement of Maori affairs. Where the war had been, tribal lands lay empty—their former owners were in the King country, north and west of Lake Taupo, enclosing themselves within *Te Aukati*, "the border-line," over which it was death for a foeman to step. Such lands, by Maori law, belonged to the victor if he occupied them, and the Government saw to it that they were so occupied; friendly tribes had their share, and such of the Kingites as chose to surrender got theirs back, while a military settlement guarded the Upper Waikato border, and the rest was thrown open for white men's farming. The loyal Maoris, who had since 1861 been working under Grey's self-government scheme, were given legal sanction for their land-customs, endowments for their schools, and four members of their own in the General Assembly. After all, it was not til the main part of Grey's work was done that the Colonial Office managed to get rid of him. He had hurt General Cameron's

feelings at Wereroa: his despatches had of late been less polite than the Colonial Office was used to receiving: towards the end of 1867 he received a curt note to say that his successor would be named shortly. So unanimous and so condemnatory was New Zealand's reply to this that the British Minister was driven to explaining the dismissal—weakly—as a mere routine matter, not in any way a censure on the Governor. Grey went, all the same; and took with him the knowledge that he was reverenced by every man in the islands, white or Maori, and had gained a more personal affection from all who knew him well.

***Peace at last.***—Sir George Bowen came from Queensland to succeed him. He had been the adviser of political neophytes at Brisbane, and his sympathies were more active in colonial politics than his official superiors in London cared for (as was seen in Victoria later on); but at Wellington he had a quiet career. Donald M'Lean, the most "understanding" of Native Ministers, guided the friendly Maori chiefs and gradually pacified the unfriendly—though Tawhiao and his recalcitrants sulked till 1881 and were not entirely reconciled till 1892. Julius Vogel initiated a definite policy of assisted immigration and railway- and road-making, involving a large expenditure of loan-moneys. The provincial Governments opposed him: their financial arrangements depended on their control of Crown lands, and Vogel wished to take some of these and pay for his railways by the sale of them. They deprived him of this resource: he replied in 1875 by carrying Acts which abolished them, in spite of strong opposition from Sir George Grey, who had been living quietly near Auckland and now became a party leader in the colony he had shaped. He became Premier also, for a short time: but his Ministry had to face the commercial collapse of 1879, which came of too long persistence in the Vogel policy of heavy borrowings. Nor was he a practical Leader of the Opposition. Yet his influence is paramount in the colony to-day: for its newer statesmen are of his training or the disciples of men whom he trained. Robert Stout was

a young colleague of his, and so was John Ballance, whose death in 1893 was no less loss to New Zealand than Canning's was to Great Britain in 1827. And it is the party of Ballance that Richard Seddon leads to-day, while his latest scheme for a federation of Polynesia is but the revival of plans made long before by Grey.

The crisis of 1879 was long-continuing in its effects. The prices of farm produce went down and stayed down. The yield of gold—not only from the alluvial fields of the South Island, but from the later-found reefs of Coromandel and the Thames Valley—fell off greatly. The colonists fought hard, retrenching their public expenditure somewhat drastically, and finding new sources of income in the export of frozen mutton and dairy products. The trend of policy was towards closer farming, and State aid of various kinds to the small occupier: and a coalition of Grey's men with the Labour party, formed in 1890, developed this into a deliberate assumption by the State of many duties that we still look upon as matters of private concern, so that the New Zealand Hansard has for some years been a handbook of "advanced" theories of legislation.

## B.—*Federation*

When the British Government assented in 1850 to the separation of Victoria from New South Wales and in 1859 to that of Queensland, it was certainly not anticipated that the division would be so complete and so long-lasting. Earl Grey had done his best to assimilate the constitutions and landlaws of the provinces east of 129°; and for several years after self-government was established proposals for federal union cropped up. Wentworth in 1857 formed a society of Australians in London to promote this: in 1860 three Australian parliaments were considering a definite scheme.

***Years of Disunion.***—But the colonies could not forget their mutual jealousies. Victoria chafed for many years over

her restricted boundaries, especially over the curious provision which ended her territory at the southern bank of the Murray, giving all its stream to New South Wales. The mother-colony envied its neighbour's sudden wealth and greater population, and sneered at its small area as "the cabbage-garden," while Melbourne men mocked at "sleepy Sydney" and talked about "Lagsland."[1] Queensland and South Australia had enough to do in self-development, and in them the provincial feeling was less pronounced—though it was slowly that Adelaide forgot to resent the supposed designs of Brisbane politicians on North Australia. But without the two populous south-eastern colonies no federation was possible; and between them bitterness grew daily. When Victoria in 1866 adopted a policy of high protective tariffs, the ill-feeling was increased. In 1871 there was a momentary access of good humour, and the parliaments might then have been persuaded into making the duties differential in favour of goods from other Australian colonies: to do this, however, an Imperial Act must be passed—for differential duties were forbidden in the Constitutions—and by the time it was passed the moment of conciliatoriness had passed also. Then Victorian farmers complained that their implements were taxed while their stock must compete in open market against herds and flocks from beyond the Murray. They were pacified with a stocktax,—and every bridge and punt and ford on the great stream became a block in the way of natural traffic, seeing that a man could not legally ride across to see his nearest neighbour without all manner of checks and formalities. After that the borderlands soon became federalist. But the voting strength was in the cities, and their rivalry was too keen to be thus overborne. Australia isolated was Australia in fragments: it needed the pressure of the outside world to make union possible.

***Outside pressure.***—We warned France off Australia in 1839, and forestalled her in New Zealand in 1840: what she did beyond those bounds was no concern of ours—so we

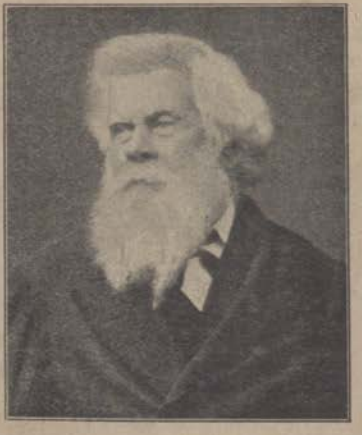
[1] "Lag," *i.q.* "convict."

then thought—and she was allowed to spend the forties in absorbing Tahiti and its group, and in 1853 to seize New Caledonia. Then came the years when British statesmen felt the colonies an incubus, and longed to have no serious political interests outside the home islands: Australia was experimenting with its new-given liberties, and had no time to think of anything else: moreover, the prevalent ideal of statesmanship was a sort of benign selfishness, a close attention to one's own immediate welfare coupled with benevolent non-interference in other people's affairs. German traders established themselves solidly in Samoa in 1857, and Americans followed them in 1868. Fiji was offered to us—vainly—in 1859, and we were only driven into annexing it in 1874 by the scandals of uncontrolled "blackbirding" in connection with Fiji sugar plantations. It was not till 1878 that the British Government began to take a real interest in the Western Pacific, and at that time we were entangled in serious European troubles. We managed, however, to make several satisfactory arrangements during that year and the next: a Convention with France neutralized the New Hebrides, others with Germany and the United States gave us our share of influence in the Samoan group, and we concluded a treaty with Tonga to balance a German one made in 1876. But our negotiations with Berlin did not include New Guinea, although Germans were already eyeing it, and had established a trading settlement at Mioko on one of the islands to the northward.

***Intercolonial Conferences.***—Meanwhile the Australian colonies had been accustoming themselves to the idea of united action under pressure of another sort, the growing influx of Chinese labourers who were ready to do white men's work—not so well, but more cheaply; and Sir Henry Parkes, in those days almost the only Australian politician with genuinely Imperial views, persuaded an intercolonial Conference in 1881 to draw up a scheme for joint action in matters of common interest. While the various parliaments were still thinking this over, the question of New Guinea

became urgent. The German press was advocating its annexation: Russia and Italy were said to have designs on it: a German company was openly formed to colonize it. Queensland refused to await the result of parleyings with the Colonial Office, and annexed the island to the Empire on its own responsibility, backed by the strong approval of the other colonies. Lord Derby, the Colonial Secretary, refused to be hurried, saying placidly that he was sure no other nation wanted New Guinea, and annexation must wait till he had thought things over. At that the colonies fumed. A Convention met at Sydney that represented every British colony of Australasia, and set to work to formulate unanimous demands about a good deal besides the matter in hand. Lord Derby was told, emphatically, that New Guinea should be annexed at once; that France, which was using New Caledonia as a penal settlement, should be required to do so no longer: that the Western Pacific should be made a British sphere of influence, and foreign Governments warned off for the future. The colonies proved their earnestness by offering to contribute to any expense entailed by this programme. But they understood, too, how much more effective their requisitions would have been if they had come from a single Pan-Australasian State instead of from a mere temporary combination of none-too-friendly ones; and the Convention, before it was dissolved, revived the 1881 scheme and shaped it into what, by an Imperial Act of 1885, became the Federal Council. Parkes had hoped for much more—this Council could only draw up laws which no colony need adopt unless it chose—and so persuaded New South Wales to stand out and wait for better things: four colonies, however, (Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, and West Australia), made regular appointments to the Council, and its meetings at least accustomed the leaders of political opinion to discuss with each other matters of joint concern and seek for common grounds of agreement.

The immediate effect of the 1883 Convention was not great. France agreed not to send *recidivistes* (habitual



SIR HENRY PARKES

criminals) to New Caledonia, and a British protectorate was proclaimed over south-eastern New Guinea. But Germany was allowed to take the north-eastern coast and all the neighbouring islands north of 8° S. lat.; in Samoa, too, whose King asked for our protectorate and was of course refused by Lord Derby, Germans became actively aggressive, and it took four years of civil war and angry international parleyings to restore comparative peace. Australians, not yet accustomed to compromise with foreigners, had an uneasy feeling that the mother-country was not much interested in their affairs, and there was a revival—all the more serious because it was a popular rather than a political movement—of the old desires for complete independence, since inclusion within the Empire seemed to mean little but disappointment.

***The Convention of 1891.***—The leading politicians, of course, knew better, and took steps to make clear the Empire's defensive value. A conference held in London at the time of the 1887 Jubilee resulted in the Naval Defence Scheme, by which Australia hired from Britain a special fleet of seven warships for the protection of Australian ports, and in an Imperial officer's report on the land defences of the various colonies. This woke again men's hopes of federation, and Sir Henry Parkes succeeded in arranging for a new Federal Convention. So in 1891 each of the Australian legislatures sent seven delegates to Sydney: from New Zealand only three came, but one of them was Sir George Grey. This Convention drafted and discussed and approved a Bill establishing a federal parliament of two houses, one chosen by the colonial legislatures and representing the separate colonies, the other elected by the people and representing proportionately the whole population of Australia. There was to be a Governor-General sent from England, and a locally appointed Governor for each colony. Between the federated colonies trade must be free, and as against the outside world there must be a uniform tariff imposed by the central Government; but it would have control only in this and some other specified subjects, all matters not actually

mentioned being left to the local legislatures. This Bill was to be passed in each colony before being sent to London for approval, and Victoria passed it accordingly; in New South Wales the Parkes Ministry was dismissed from office almost at once, for minor reasons, while the Bill was still under discussion, and the subject dropped. The other colonies waited for New South Wales, and while they waited the commercial crisis of 1893 came upon them, and they forgot federation in the stress of bank-failures and collapsed "land-booms" and the necessity for drastic retrenchment.

***Popularizing the movement.***—As a matter of fact, the mass of the people had not been much interested in this scheme of 1891. It grew out of questions of defence, and few Australians troubled themselves about such matters: it was engineered by politicians, and the people at large had little personal interest in the vagaries of the men they sent to parliament. The friends of federation, therefore, began their last campaign with direct appeals to public opinion, and George Reid, becoming Premier of New South Wales in 1894, met the Federal Council at Hobart early next year with proposals for a new Convention. This time the electors themselves were to send delegates, ten from each colony: and the Constitution elaborated by this body was to be submitted to the people direct in a *referendum* for their approval or otherwise. The scheme found favour: the people woke up, and took vigorous interest in it: five legislatures (Queensland standing out) passed the necessary enabling Acts,[1] after a little grumbling at the subordinate position assigned to themselves. The Convention met in Adelaide in March, 1897, revised the Bill of 1891, and adjourned for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. In September it met again in Sydney, and considered suggestions which the local legislatures had made meanwhile. A third meeting in Melbourne, early in 1898, finished its work, and on June 3 the Bill was submitted to the popular

[1] Western Australia sent parliamentary, not popularly elected delegates

vote in four colonies (for West Australia waited on the vote in New South Wales, having agreed to federate only if that colony did so too).

***The Act of 1898.***—In the main the Act was that of 1891, but some of its divergences were important. The Senate became elective, on the same franchise as the Lower House, but with a longer term: each colony was given six members, voting for them as a single constituency. State finance—an awkward matter, since the central Government was to control the Customs, on which the local Governments largely depended for revenue—was provided for by requiring the Commonwealth to raise from Customs £4 for every £1 it might itself need from that source, and to hand back the surplus to the States. On these questions New South Wales was uneasy: the first seemed to give the less populous States power to overrule the wishes of the more populous; the second was thought to necessitate protective duties, and New South Wales was a freetrade colony. It, however, like the other three, gave a majority of votes in favour of the Bill; but a local Act had insisted that the affirmative votes must be at least 80,000 in number, and they fell short by more than 8000. The actual majority, indeed, was only 5367 out of a total vote of 137,823, or less than four per cent. But the other three had given large majorities in the Bill's favour; Australia, too, was thoroughly in earnest this time about federation, and each colony proved it by maintaining in office the Ministries of 1894 till matters were finally settled.

This was a new feature in local politics, and its intention was unmistakable. The New South Wales legislature formulated amendments, and the Premiers in council discussed them early in 1899, Queensland on this occasion joining the rest. The financial scheme was given a ten-years term only, later arrangements being left to the Federal Parliament. The capital city of the Commonwealth was to be on Federal territory within the bounds of New South Wales (as the mother-colony), but at least a hundred miles from Sydney, as a concession to Melbourne feeling. The difficulty about

the Senate was met by providing that, when the two Houses disagreed, they should in the last resort sit as one and the decision of an absolute majority should be final. With these amendments the Bill was again referred to the New South Wales electors, and on June 20 accepted by a majority of over twelve per cent. on a total vote of nearly 200,000. South Australia had accepted it two months earlier, and within ten weeks Victoria, Tasmania, and Queensland had passed it also: West Australia hung back, but came in during 1900; the Imperial Parliament considered it the same year, introducing a few modifications in legal points whose import the colonists had not well understood and over which they had no desire to make difficulties; and on January 1, 1901, the Australian Commonwealth took its place in the Empire beside the Dominion of Canada.

***Australasia and the South Pacific.***—The last few years before Federation brought a recurrence of civil war in Samoa, which had been for some time under a joint protectorate of Britain, Germany, and the United States. It was just as well that this and other matters likely to cause international disputes in the South Seas should be settled before Australia became one force, and a series of conventions and understandings was arrived at by the end of 1899 which settled the islands of the Pacific into more clearly defined political groups. The North Pacific is divided between the United States—which hold the Philippines and the Sandwich Islands and Guam of the Ladrones—and Germany; Britain owns in it only the northern Gilberts and a few scattered islets east of them. In the South Pacific the United States own Tutuila by Samoa. Germany has the rest of the Samoan group, Bougainville of the Solomons, and the islands west of it towards New Guinea. France keeps New Caledonia; also the Marquesas, the Society Islands, and the groups east or south-east. The New Hebrides are neutral under joint guarantee of France and Britain, and are therefore still matter for bargainings and protests. All the rest are British: the Cook group is ad-

ministered by New Zealand, the Fiji group is a Crown colony, Tonga is a locally-independent kingdom under our protection, Northern Polynesia from the Solomons eastwards is looked after by a High Commissioner who is also Governor of Fiji. New Zealand, which Grey in his first governorship tried to make the British centre of Polynesia, still cherishes the hope he gave it, and the present Ministry has made proposals for an island Federation to match the just-completed continental one: but Fiji, which would be the second State under such a scheme, has close connections with the trade of Sydney, and too many conflicting interests are involved to allow of the matter being soon settled.

# CHAPTER IX

## *Non-white Elements*

### A.—*The Blackfellows*

Not often in the world's history have white men come upon a land so empty as was Australia in 1788. Its story, in fact, would lack little of completeness even if its aborigines went altogether unnoticed, and would have been hardly altered if they had never existed. They are leaving no constructed works behind them except a few weirs on the inland rivers—no tangible memorials of any sort but trees carved with symbolic lines, rocks roughly incised, and cave-roofs decorated with crude designs. The fear of them helped to keep early convicts within the bounds of the penal settlement. The clashing of their own with European customs drove them now and again to harass outlying settlements, and once they broke into desperate but ineffective war. Here and there packs[1] of them still maintain a settled hostility to all intruders. But for the most part they shrink back before the settler towards the half-unknown central region of the continent: where from choice or necessity some remain in their old haunts and risk contact with the whites, they repay brutality with brutality, but are ready enough to live in peaceful dependence where they find kindliness and an intelligent protection.

***Their origin.***—No one knows where they came from. The least improbable conjecture infers that very long ago, in days when even the Chinese were savages, a branch of

[1] This word is borrowed from Professor Jenks to distinguish the Australian communities from the genuine "tribes" of Maoris

that Dravidian race that now inhabits the hills of southern India made its way down through Malaysia to the North Australian coast, intermarrying as it went with the frizzy-haired Melanesians; and then spread gradually south and south-west across the continent along tracks determined by the food supply, until all habitable districts were utilized. A race of still earlier occupants, more distinctly Melanesian, was driven by the newcomers across Bass Strait into Tasmania, where it dwindled till the coming of the white men, fought them more fiercely than did the mainland blacks, and in the end became extinct.

***Their social system.***—The "blackfellow"—one uses that term generically for the Australian native, though he is no more than chocolate-brown—soon reconciled himself to being mastered by his abode, and developed an intricate form of society adapted in every particular to his environment. Chiefly he desired to avoid prolonged starvation, and to distribute what food there was as evenly as might be. For this reason, seemingly, was devised a remarkable series of relationships in which a child belongs to its father's camp,[1] finds its marriage regulated by its mother's class, and is restricted as to food according to the class-combination represented by the two parents. The result is that in any family the husband belongs to one totem, his wives to another,[2] and their children to a third: and as each totem has its own food-restrictions, a man does not much lessen his stock of food by taking several wives, nor are children a serious burden on their parents. Furthermore, small packs occupied large hunting-districts, each its own, and kept themselves so distinct—lest at any one place there should be too many mouths to feed—that the speech of each is rather a distinct language[3] than a dialect. Thus in a Queensland

[1] A pack may consist of one or more camps.

[2] This is quaintly reflected in aboriginal stories, in which birds and animals never have wives of their own kind—the emu's wives being crows, the eaglehawk marrying an opossum, and so on.

[3] "Nearly as intimately connected as Spanish and Portuguese" (E. M. Curr), but this seems to be an overstatement.

district less than three hundred miles square seven languages are spoken, one of them in two dialects and one in five, while the packs range from three hundred down to twenty in number. Nor are the languages mere aggregations of names; some have an elaborate grammar with suffixes denoting not only person and gender but position (*i.e.* differing for a man close in front, close behind, or at a distance), as well as cases, numbers (including the dual), tenses, moods, prepositional affixes, and such paraphernalia of the grammarian. It is ideas that the blackfellow lacks, not forms for expressing them. For number he rarely has words beyond "two" or combinations higher than "five" (two-two-one). Time is expressed in suns (or in sleeps) and moons—days and months; size is described vaguely. But the natural features of his district have each their name, even to the larger trees, and his vocabulary of directions (to the right, left, north, south, etc.) is ample.

***Government.***—Such government as he submits to is administered by the camp-council, which may consist of all the adult males or may be confined to the older and wiser men. Under their special care are the marriage-customs, and they ordain justice between disputants on the "eye for an eye" principle, if possible, always with the view that the camp shall not lose strength by the death or permanent maiming of one of its members. The husband lords it over the members of his family, this side of killing, until his children are of an age to be initiated and take their place in the pack, but the council is supreme over him in family matters also. For convenience sake one pack may recognise that its members have some obligations to other neighbouring friendly packs; it is not a point of custom, however, that neighbouring packs should be friendly, and to non-friendlies and outsiders the blackfellow owes no duties whatsoever. As for religion, the Eastern Australians (roughly speaking, those that live east of 142° and the Darling-Murray line) have a common belief in a superhuman being whom they know by various names, Baiamai being perhaps the commonest; the packs of the centre and west

trace their ceremonies from the usage of mythical ancestors, and have various names for powers beyond their understanding, some good, some evil, but do not exactly worship them, though some of the dances connected with them are ritual and propitiatory.

***Trade.***—They make the most of the country's resources by a commercial system based on strict honesty. Different districts have their own special manufactures, depending sometimes on the natural product of the soil, sometimes on the skill or whim of a particular family. Thus *pituri* (a sort of native tobacco), the ochres used for personal decoration, grindstones, and so forth, are only found in certain places, while nets, implements, and weapons of special pattern are the work of particular camps. These are bartered at well-known market-places along fixed trade routes, a party of blacks going off with their own merchandize on a long round—sometimes for more than a year—and bringing back the commodities of a dozen districts. There seem to be no middlemen: if a would-be purchaser cannot go himself to market, he sends a "message-stick" [1] by a friend, the order is attended to, and goods sent in return later on are identified as payment by the presence of the same stick.

The better they are known, in fact, the more evident becomes their ingenuity and intelligence. That in spite of all they should be so primitive in social type is the effect of their age-long isolation from the rest of humanity. As hunters they are unsurpassed: nor, taking the country as it is by nature, could one much improve on their arrangements. But there are no traces of any attempts to improve it, to domesticate animals, to cultivate crops. Happy thoughts of that kind probably occurred to very few among primitive men, but, once hit upon in one community, the practice spread to its neighbours and became common the world over. So elsewhere the packs of pure hunting folk may

[1] No message is sent on the stick: it is simply carved with signs that will identify the sender of the order with the sender of payment later on, and answers rather to our visiting-cards.

be of low type because they could not appreciate or utilize the great discovery; in Australia they simply did not hear of it.

***Contact with Whites.***—Their relations with white men were for many years strained to the breaking-point. They were men of understanding, feeling clearly that the land was theirs and their customs were best suited to it. We occupied their land, and violated their customs every day. They made room for us, sometimes under protest, sometimes with cordiality: they were inclined, indeed, to treat us as *revenants*, their own dead come back to them with magical powers. But the convicts treated them brutally; they found the new magic hostile, and planned to destroy it: and the growth of squatting westwards irritated them still more, because it meant much new game in their hunting-land which yet they were ill-treated for killing. How should they comprehend the legal difference between cattle and kangaroos? They speared the cattle and the stockmen shot them—for in those outlying districts the central Government was weak to maintain order—until in 1842 a simultaneous rising edged the colony with savage war from the Glenelg to the Darling Downs. But the packs were too small, and their power of acting with each other too limited, to make sustained effort: the rising collapsed, and Southern Australia has since lived in peace. Queensland still has irreconcileables, though it is hard to judge how far the summary methods of past generations of white men are responsible for this, how far it was inevitable in the clash of customs. In Western Australia it seems more probable that hostility is nearly always due to some previous white aggression. However that may be, the various Governments (that of Queensland especially) are studying carefully to ensure the preservation and welfare of the aboriginal race as far as wise kindnesses can do so.

***A warning.***—In discussing this subject almost every statement of a general kind that can be made requires many qualifications. What has been said here is on the whole

typal;[1] more packs conform to the picture than do not. But the task of summarizing blackfellow customs is quite as complex as that of describing, say, in a few general propositions the habits of the races known as Aryan—except that we know a great deal more about the Aryans. The totem system, for instance, of the Central Australians, studied by Spencer and Gillen, has no connection with parental totems: there is a class system which corresponds fairly well with the totem arrangements described above, but a man's totem in Central Australia is decided on quite different grounds. However, even a poor composite photograph may have some value, or at least some interest, and this account makes no greater pretensions.

## B.—*The Maoris*

The tribes that held New Zealand before our coming were of a much higher type. Their social system was genuinely tribal, even clannish; for though they did not domesticate animals (in New Zealand they found none, and brought with them only the rat and the dog), they had learnt to till the ground, and their *taro* (yam) and *kumara* (sweet potato) crops were their main food supply. They had chiefs, too, and an aristocracy somewhat of the feudal type, for the motive of their life was above all things fighting. For this they were organized; all their ceremonies contemplated it as possible at any moment; it was not only the final settlement of all disputes, but often the amusement of their spare time. They lived in or round pas, stockaded and entrenched villages on high ground; sometimes they built a pa in preparation for a fight, as an English club might prepare and roll a cricket-pitch. And the object of fighting was, one might almost say, rather to fight than to win: at least, to win without a stiff battle gave the victors no great satisfaction, —they liked to feed up their enemies if they were starving,

[1] Of the unadulterated blackfellow, that is: the "tame" hangers-on of white settlements have been left out of account.

and could not appreciate the slow burrowing of approach and traverse which British troops (taught by the Crimea) employed against them in the sixties. The actual battles, however, were very real, and bloodshed demanded retaliation, while for many years after white men knew them cannibalism was still a common practice.

***Their origin and decline.***—Their origin is nearly as much in dispute as that of the blackfellows. It is quite certain that they are of the stock which has peopled nearly all Polynesia: it is probable that that stock (like the Australian, but some ages later) came eastward from the Indies through Malaysia, and was driven to scattered migrations among the islands of the Pacific by invasions of the present Melanesian and Malay races. A few of the original stock still hold to a district on the north-east coast of New Guinea: the rest spread far and wide over Polynesia, to the Sandwich Islands, to Tahiti, to Samoa, preserving under dialectic forms the name of their long-ago home and affixing it to some part of their new one. Hawaii, Savaii, preserved the tradition of a land called by the Maoris Hawaiiki, as in Hellenic territories Olympus became the name of some high peak dominating the lands of a reminiscent tribe. From one of these tropical island-groups New Zealand received nearly six hundred years ago its earliest known colonists, looking for the greenstone of the South Island, of which their chiefs jade weapons were made. The South Island, however, was too cold for them, and only a few degenerating clans settled south of Kaikoura. The North Island was peopled along its coasts and rivers and lakes (for the Maori delighted in fish) by successive immigrations, the whole population being kept by continuous tribal warfare at a level of about a hundred and fifty thousand. When white traders supplied Hongi and his fellows with firearms, a rapid diminution in their numbers began at once, and the years of European warfare helped on the process. Peace has brought some slackening of it, but they still die off—largely because they are a consumptive race, and peace has brought them down from

their high-perched pas to live in the steam and slush of swampy ground. We have stopped the wars for which they had organised themselves, and do not seem to have given them instead any sufficient motive for healthy tribal life. It has been too long the way of Britons, the kindliest of all European colonizers, to begin their reform of "savages" by hopelessly destroying the reformee's self-respect: Zulu and Fijian tell the same tale, and the Maori has suffered along with them. It is not the fault of colonial governments so much as of half-educated British public opinion: now that a more scientific and less merely "humanitarian" study of native races has begun, there is hope of a checked decline and possibly a coming increase in their numbers.

***Contact with the Whites.***—Of their relations with the intruding whites much has been already said, for the history of New Zealand up to 1870 is chiefly the story of those relations. They resented any attempts at independent settlement; the land was theirs, and their life depended on holding it: if, on the other hand, a white man chose to live among them as one of them, identifying himself with the tribe that sheltered him—becoming a Pakeha Maori, a "stranger Maori," as they said—they looked after him well and were proud to own him, and often gave him a chief's rank in war. Such men, however, were usually adventurers of a bad class, and the Maoris got little good of them, though one at least, F. E. Maning, was of the fine stamp of pioneers, and has left the record of his life and observations among the Hokianga tribes to be the best piece of prose literature New Zealand can show. Friction between white man and brown was usually a matter of *tapu*-violation or infringement of native land-custom, which have been already noticed (pp. 48-9, 53). It was from Marsden and the missionaries who followed on lines laid down by him that the really civilizing influence came. They were practical men, and taught handicrafts and morals as well as theology: the Maoris were quick to recognise and utilize everything in any of the three studies which could be turned to advantage,

all the more readily because these white men at least were disinterested, seekers after neither bargains nor land. The converts grew confused often enough over points of doctrine, as most non-Aryan converts do; but cannibalism disappeared, and serfdom came to an end, and however little the more self-isolating clans might learn, that little made for good.

***Their Art.***—Of all the non-Aryan races we have encountered in our empire-making, the Maoris are the most interesting. Their splendid bravery appeals to us, their humour ought to. They are more imaginative than most races without a written literature: their art (almost entirely confined to carving) is grotesquely humorous beyond common acceptance, perhaps, when they deal with life, but is always finely decorative and fitted to the thing it adorns. They had, indeed, schools of art (not institutions, styles rather), each tribe adhering to its own type of ornament. When one remembers that all the best of their work was done with stone tools and on hard wood, one is inclined to rank them high among lovers of art, and the beauty of their tattooings, dyed mats, and feather mantles confirms the feeling. If European art and the many crudities that represent it in exported manufactures are, as it is said they are, distracting their artist-sense and altering their standard of taste, the world will be regrettably the poorer.

## C.—*Other Alien Races*

White Australia as a whole regards with great jealousy the influx of Asiatic immigrants which quite recently threatened to affect the homogeneity of population in several northern districts. Of the Kanakas—Melanesians, mostly, from the Solomon Islands and New Hebrides—mention has been made already (pp. 108-9); they are localized in the sugar-districts of Queensland, and their control is no longer a question of serious importance. Nor are the Malay divers of the northern pearl-fisheries felt to be a pressing danger. But the Japanese, who form nearly half the pearl-fishing com-

munity and are spreading rapidly down the eastern coast, are watched with eyes askance, and the Federal Government will probably confirm and extend arrangements already made by separate colonies with Japan for checking this influx. Coolies from India are found in the Northern Territory, the Resident acting as immigration agent in connection with the Indian Government. Hindoos also carry on a hawking trade in the sparsely populated districts further south, and are making small settlements in the north-coast districts of New South Wales: as hawkers they form part of a community drawn from various Oriental races, known collectively to the suspicious colonist as "Assyrians" or "Syrians." The growing use of camels for transport work throughout Australia west of the Darling has introduced small bodies of Afghan camel-drivers, against whom the white teamster has very ill feelings—so ill, indeed, as to include the camel also, and lead to periodical agitations against its use. But these are losing strength.

***The Chinese.***—All these races combined do not exercise the Australian mind half as much as the Chinese. They were first attracted to the continent by the gold-discoveries, and were the cause of frequent and often serious riots on the goldfields: in 1861 they amounted to quite three per cent. of the total population, passing during the next twenty years from colony to colony as discoveries of gold were reported, and going back to China in large numbers when they had amassed enough wealth. In 1878, however, a new inrush began, and lasted for nine years. This time they came not to the goldfields merely, but to take up trades in the towns, and gradually the market-gardening and a good deal of the furniture-making fell into their hands, while Chinese quarters of the noisomest were formed in the very centres of the chief towns. Several intercolonial conferences dealt with the growing danger, and at last one held in 1888 procured practical unanimity among the colonies. The inrush was stopped either by imposing a heavy poll tax on new arrivals, or (as in South Australia and the Northern Territory) by severely limiting the number of Chinese a vessel may land,

or (as in New South Wales) by combining both checks. In several colonies they were forbidden to work on gold-fields except by special permission. As a result the number of newcomers to New South Wales (to take one colony for a pattern of all) fell from 1798 in 1887 to 1 in 1889, and the proportion of Chinese to the total population of Australasia, which in 1881—not long after the beginning of the inrush—was over 15 per 1000, was in 1891 less than 10, and is steadily decreasing. That they are industrious, and that without them Australia would sadly lack vegetable food, no one denies: but it is chiefly the lowest class of Chinese that migrate to Australia, and their ideas on sanitation and on morals are so incompatible with those of Europeans as to make their presence in large numbers at best a nuisance and at worst a serious danger to the health and progress of white communities. During the last few years several colonies—West Australia at the beginning of 1898, New South Wales at the end of that year, and others since—have adopted from Natal an Act which restricts the immigration of Asiatics by requiring every newcomer (with, of course, certain diplomatic and hospitable exemptions) to prove, if required, his knowledge of some European language in simple phrases.

# CHAPTER X

## *Social Development*

### A.—*The Legacy of Convictism*

When Phillip foresaw the empire he was about to found, he did not contemplate the use of convict material. "I think," he said, "they should ever remain separated from the garrison and other settlers that may come from Europe." Year by year he implored the authorities in London to encourage free immigrants: "a few intelligent farmers would do more for the colony than five hundred settlers from the soldiers or convicts." He got no answers, or unsatisfactory ones; and when, in Brisbane's time, the inflow of free settlers began, emancipist employers and convict servants had taken so great a share in opening up the country that the separation suggested by Phillip was neither possible nor desirable.[1]

It is futile to slur over this element in colonial society. On the other hand, it is mischievous to lay great stress on the story of the later penal settlements. The convict system is too often identified in our minds with the severities of Port Arthur and the horrors of Norfolk Island: but these were isolated gaols for the habitual criminal, and belong rather to the history of British pœnology than to that of colonial life. The brutal escapee or ex-convict was hated and feared by his less criminal fellows as much as by the free population, and his vileness tended rather to deter men from imitating him. These doubly and trebly convicted men, moreover,

[1] In 1836 New South Wales contained 32,000 freemen, 17,000 emancipists, and 28,000 convicts under sentence.

were but a few among the mass of prisoners; of the rest many were sent out for slight causes, some were guilty of political offences only, others had even broken some law merely that they might join their friends in the new country. Up to 1812, certainly, the supervision of transports was so slack that much harm was done by vile companionship on the voyage, and even under Macquarie prisoners were classified rather by their manual skill than by their criminality; but from that time forward the segregation of the worst convicts was carefully arranged, and the class that came most into contact with the settlers was characterized rather by weak will and lax morality than by deliberately vicious intention.

***The Assignment System.***—Very early in the colony's history there had grown up a practice of assigning prisoners to labour on farms privately owned, the owners becoming responsible for their maintenance. Presently it became the custom so to assign men of any trade to anyone who would undertake to maintain them, usually to Government officials or officers of the Corps. The prisoner then earned his own living with very little restraint on his freedom, paying his "master" weekly for the privilege. In some cases the salary of officials was similarly paid by allotting them prisoners whom they hired out to others: these prisoners being still nominally in Government employ, the officials drew their rations from the public store to sell or use otherwise, and the total profit thus made on each allottee came to about £40 a year. This system was mischievous enough when the employers were free men; but many of the inferior officials were convicts themselves,—so, too, were most of the overseers of large farms, even when the owner was a free man—and they were apt to give the worst criminals undue licence, treating more inoffensive ones with gross brutality. Thus even among the convict bushrangers there were two classes—escapees from the Government road-gangs, hardened from the first, valuing their liberty as a means of revenge, and refugees from private employ, who took to the bush simply as a shelter from the tyranny of their overseers, and used no

more violence against law-abiding folk than might procure them food enough to live on.

When free settlement began to spread, the demand for assigned servants increased rapidly Up to 1831 their use was one of the conditions on which land could be obtained, and they practically formed the wage-earning class of the community, since most immigrants preferred to emphasize their freedom by choosing some independent mode of life. Nor were they the shepherds only or drovers or ploughmen or mechanics. Domestic servants, nurses, tutors even, were chosen from the same class, and it is easy to make pictures of the effect on the free children constantly in their company and under their charge. Yet such pictures are often exaggerated by writers who draw their material too exclusively from the House of Commons Committee's Report of 1837 on Transportation. That was an age apt to overdo its humanitarianism: and, valuable as the Report was in disclosing the brutalities of the penal stations, it was not altogether fair to the colony at large. After all, the training of the early thirties was mainly responsible for social conditions ten or fifteen years later, which were probably the happiest Australia has known.

***Assisted Immigration.*** — The immigrants of the twenties went at their own expense, and settled themselves for the most part in farming communities on the table-land or the eastern rivers. In 1832 began "assisted immigration," half the land fund of New South Wales being set aside to pay the outward passage of artizans and servants. From that time up to 1888 the mother-colony made it her policy to attract desirable immigrants in this way, 135,000 being so aided by the State in the first thirty years.[1] For a year or two the scheme was mismanaged, but in 1837 the right class of immigrant was secured. The newcomers transformed the colony completely, taking up trades and employments in town

[1] Victoria discarded the system soon after separation, as the gold-discoveries made it superfluous: South Australia abandoned it in 1889: Queensland maintains it still.

and country which had hitherto been in convict or emancipist hands—a result to which the abolition of assignment in 1838 contributed a good deal. The change was not effected without some friction: free labour is more costly than bond labour, and some squatters even tried to get Indian coolies as shepherds rather than pay the free man's price. When transportation ceased, the inflow of money spent by the British Government on the upkeep of the convict system ceased also, and the finances of New South Wales felt the loss. Moreover, commerce had expanded too fast, as happens in young countries, and money had been poured into the colony by Englishmen eager for a good investment: prices were inflated, lenders took insufficient security; the natural collapse in 1843 shook the whole fabric of trade, and a great bank failure brought Sydney so low that men were again, as in the early days of famine, fed from the public stores.

## B.—*Squatterdom*

But the colonist of those days was adventurous and elastic of mind. Sydney was not long filled with unemployed: though wages were low in the country, there was work there, and free life, and many chances. So the years that followed saw the growth of social conditions that men still look back to with desire. In the town hardworking immigrants built up again the credit of Sydney's trade. Fertile valleys of the tableland were tilled by farmers—newly arrived or colonial-born—who knew their business. For the rest, open downs and timbered riverflats and the wellgrassed fringe of the great plains were the home of flocks and herds that multiplied yearly, the domain of men bred in the traditions of rural England,—some of them young, highspirited, hoping to renew in Australia that country life which the spread of factories seemed to be spoiling for ever at home—some officers of the army, attracted by the names of their old leaders, Brisbane or Bourke or Gipps—some sons of the earliest settlers, proud of the country they had rescued from

THE RIVERINE PLAIN (DARLING RIVER, N.S.W.).

convictism. There was still room for all, without overcrowding the towns or driving stockowners into the drier wastes. Service was freely rendered by free men, who had not yet learnt aggressive independence from Californian gold-hunters. It was an age of transition, and could not have lasted many years, so ephemeral were the conditions of its existence: but while it lasted it was the true Golden Age of Australia.

It was fitting that in such halcyon days Australian literature should be born. The literature of convictism is a later growth, the work of men ransacking old records and building up from the recollections of others stories of incident and melodrama. But "Geoffry Hamlyn" was written on the spot, so to speak: for Henry Kingsley escaped from the turmoil of the diggings to find a year of quiet in that noble Western District of Victoria, where gold was not and is not, but only lakes and fantastic hills and spreading pasturelands. There the Golden Age lingered, and he wrote of it as he knew it; how well, all who read his books can say—how truly, all who remember those days, or find to-day near the Wannon or the Cudgegong a lingering echo of them, can bear indisputable witness.

### C.—*Diggerdom*

On that happy combination of patriarchal and modern comforts there broke in the aggressive democratism of the goldfields. Society was cast into the melting-pot. When it cooled into shape again the stratification was found to be entirely new. For in so young a country wealth must tell heavily; and wealth, during the goldrush, was the gift of luck merely. Education availed the digger not at all: the possession of capital to begin with was not of much use, because it was easy to earn some, if you preferred that humdrum method of existence, and storekeepers gave long credit: honesty and good breeding saved men's lives often enough in those rough camps. but had no gold-value: even technical knowledge was

not a sure aid to prosperity. If you struck a rich lead, and did not lose your treasure to a gang of bushrangers, and kept a clear head through it all, you were wealthy: but not many complied with all these conditions. The diggers who profited most in the end were probably those who, coming from mountain-farms to the goldfields of New South Wales, or from homes in Tasmania and South Australia to those of Victoria, sent their winnings home month by month and went back themselves when they had secured enough to develop their own farms properly. The men who profited most were, as a rule, not diggers: they were storekeepers, publicans, purveyors of everything the diggers needed or liked at goldfields prices. Squatters, too, made money hand over hand if they were quick to take so good an opportunity of selling their stock at great profit: but their work was handicapped by the scarcity of labour, and dealers—their own former employees, often—anticipated their action, and many of them were disinclined to meddle in the turmoil, so that their share as a whole of the new-found riches was not large. Under these economic conditions, by which wealth was the standard of social rank, and great wealth might be any man's prize, the survival of English class-distinctions became less possible than ever. Other distinctions, too, were wiped out, that are more to be regretted; notably those which still separated the free population from the hardened products of Port Arthur and Norfolk Island. It was on the diggings, not on the runs, that convictism did its worst for Australia; and where remnants of the evil influence are still found—though it fades year by year—it is to the diggings (the public-houses on them, mainly) that we may trace their origin.

***Discords.***—Professed by men who did not at heart feel their right to it, this goldfields equality tended to be self-assertive and suspicious, till the infection of it seized on the whole community. The very levelling of class-distinctions encouraged the growth of class-bitterness. The relations between squatter and selector in the sixties were, as a rule,

those of enemies, far removed from the mutual kindliness of stockowner and farmer in the days before the gold. Each now believed that the other was grasping at land not so much for its value to himself as because it might be valuable to his opponent. A mischievous competition was set up. Both classes made it their object to get out of their holdings as much immediate return as they could: the squatter overstocked his land, the farmer overcropped it. Both classes raised funds for land-purchase hastily and by all manner of devices, and so gave the great banks that grip of the country districts which has made them the principal land-owners in eastern Australia. While the men of the bush were thus at each others' throats, the townsfolk increased their commerce and their hold on the political machine. More especially in Victoria, whose immigrant diggers had been largely of the artizan class, the manufacturing interest grew powerful and prevailed upon the local legislature to give it the protection of a high tariff. For twenty years the work of material development was carried on in an atmosphere of suspicious antagonisms; while, very gradually, society was rearranging and revaluing itself, until the wealth-standard, supplanter of the birth-standard, itself began to yield place to the higher standard of personal character.

***Education and Literature.***—Not all the progress, of course, was material. Universities were founded at Sydney in 1852, at Melbourne in 1854, at Adelaide in 1874, resembling those of Edinburgh and Glasgow rather than Oxford and Cambridge. Public education was organized and reorganized, always in the direction of State primary and technical schools controlled entirely by a central department of the Government, sometimes with a view to State absorption of the secondary schools also. But the atmosphere of class-suspicion enveloped this work too: it was rarely that the advice of experts, even when they were men of European reputation, was candidly accepted by ministers and officials. The man who knew little had not yet learnt to believe in the disinterestedness of the man who knew more. As for the

literature of the age, it consisted of attempts to put new wine into old bottles—to use Australian material for reproducing the form and phraseology sanctioned by English use. Much of it was the product of journalists embodying the experience of others, not their own. The two names that stand out are those of poets, Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall: Gordon was an Englishman, knowing well what he wrote of, but frankly viewing it from the English standpoint so far as his feeling was local at all; Kendall, more graceful and more touching at his best than any Australian writer (except, maybe, Daley and Ogilvie), made the bush a mirror of his own moods and imaginings, and described its people in verses of less worth with the view and vocabulary of an outsider. A third name deserves mention here, that of a poet of wider range than Kendall or Gordon—Brunton Stephens, Scot and Queenslander, who has thrice hymned the Commonwealth, and never more nobly than when he first dreamt of its coming twenty-four years ago.

## D.—*Australia to-day*

It is not, perhaps, only under Australian conditions that townsfolk are specially the product of their towns, while the country folk belong to the whole wide country. But for the coming history of the Commonwealth that distinction has great importance. The towns of Australia are few, far apart, and disproportionately crowded; in 1898 one third of the population was packed into the five capitals, and so gave them an unduly predominant influence on Government expenditure and policy. Now in all British lands townsfolk are much alike: the type is fixed by a man's work rather than by his country: the lawyer, the merchant, the shopkeeper, the artizan, is in the main unaltered by residing at Sydney or Capetown or Toronto. Where the types specialize into varieties, the town influence is all-powerful: they are men of Melbourne, Brisbane, or Adelaide rather than Victorians or Queenslanders or South Australians. And as each Australian

capital is the chief seaport, and would like to be the only seaport, of its colony, while each is suspected by the others of wishing to attract trade that should belong to them, the town influences have on the whole made for separation and estrangement, for provincial rather than national life. The rivalry of Sydney and Melbourne was for years a principal stumbling-block in the way of Federation: the jealousies of Rockhampton and Townsville are largely responsible for the proposal to give Queensland three provinces instead of two. The importance of town-politics has been further enhanced by the supremacy of the metropolitan newspapers. Nowhere outside the various capitals are the local papers more than news- and advertisement-sheets: there is no such decentralizing influence in Australia as the provincial press supplies in England.

So the real Australian has hitherto been unrepresented and a good deal neglected. Yet it is he who will in future, if things go well, take the Commonwealth in hand. While the townsfolk wrangle or bargain among themselves over local interests, the bushmen may find their chance of united progress toward the goal of their common desire. They have a colonial patriotism, of course—a glow of good feeling in one when New South Wales wins a cricket-match, in another when the Queenslanders are praised for gallant fighting. But they have no colonial jealousies: every Australian is their comrade: their country is bounded by the sea, not by parallels of latitude. It is of them one thinks while hurriedly sketching the Australian type, the pattern to which the newest of our British nations is being moulded.

***The land and its influence.***—As far as there is national right in such matters, the rightful owners of a country are the men who have shaped it to their use. Australia needed shaping, and has repaid those who undertook the task by branding them in turn with its own mark. From end to end of it life is a continual struggle with Nature—a Protean, fantastic, elusive Nature, neither to hold nor bind, moving through unpredictable transitions by undecipherable laws. Strenuous work and skilful management will do as much

there as anywhere, up to a certain point: beyond that come floods, droughts, fires, often so sudden and so long-lasting that the wisest could neither foresee nor evade them. Between these bad seasons there are good ones so good that in some districts to save one crop out of five from floods compensates all the loss of the other four. It is not among diggers only that life in Australia is a gamble: the ups and downs of mining are magnified tenfold on stations, where a week's delay in the coming of a rainstorm may spell irretrievable disaster. In all sorts of ways the land is full of surprises. The rabbit and the sweetbriar have at times become pests beyond even Government control: the saltbush, a stunted, dusty-bluish, hopeless-looking shrub, is the best wool-producing forage plant known.

***The Australian.*** — Under these conditions money-making is spasmodic and life a succession of impromptus: yet nowhere else, perhaps, in the world can a man live so pleasantly at such small cost, while his youth and his self-reliance last. To speculate, therefore, in land, in stock, in mines is a game in which the young Australian sees no blanks: if he wins, his wealth is great; if he loses, he falls into no hopeless destitution—he can always "earn his tucker" while waiting for a fresh chance. So he passes through a stage of alternate exhilarations and despondencies to a more unemotional casualness that is not exactly cynicism and not exactly resignation: he is willing to "chance it," and if he fails—"Ah, well . . .!" His vocabulary is a legacy from the "roaring days," but to write it down endows it with unnecessary violence. His chief enemy is Nature, and on her storming has no effect: whatever the words may look like, the tone of their utterance is usually quiet and good-tempered. He is singularly alert in makeshifts, singularly careless of permanency or the solid groundwork that makes for permanency. He himself is the one permanent thing he knows, self-centred amid evershifting conditions; and he is wont to regard the instability of his surroundings with a tolerance that gives his life more ease than success.

His own personality being thus important to him, it is by their personality that he judges others. Mere money-owning is in the towns much less of a testimonial to character than it was: in the bush it is none at all. A man with money is more useful for certain purposes than a man without it, as a full purse is preferable to an empty one. But no amount of wealth will buy you the bushman's confidence, or his respect: those he reserves for the "straight" man, the "white man" —terms almost impossible to define, of which one can only say that they are compatible with many weaknesses, but no falseness. That confidence he will give readily to a fellow-bushman, very slowly to a newcomer; once given, he is even slower to take it back. Always, it is the man's self that wins it, and only by the rotting of his character is it lost.

***His Politics.***—In political matters there is the same insistence on personality. It is for men, not measures, that the Australian is wont to vote: when he chooses his representative merely for the legislation he advocates, there is either some very great matter in hand—as was Federation recently —or some very small local business of roadvote or railway construction. The candidate may be genial or brusque, crude or polished, but he must be frank—he must "show his hand" openly: nor must he take himself too seriously, for assuredly the bushman will not. So it is with the press: the papers that have wide influence, that really affect popular opinion, do so just so far as they are believed to express the undisguised personal views of their owner or editor; those that seem to speak in the interests or as the unofficial organ of some section of the community are read with distrust and followed only by men with whose already-formed opinions they coincide.

***His Literature.***—These are details, but details that must be mastered to understand what manner of man the Australian is. And we can begin to understand him better now that he is finding his voice. For round him is growing up a new literature, written from the inside by the men who know. Paterson looks at his cheery moods—boisterous sometimes, eager always for a joke or a clever piece of

work: Ogilvie touches the emotion in him, the glamour of the bush, the regret because all things in it pass so soon and fade out of existence. In Lawson the less hopeful moods find vent: his usual models are the men whom Australia has dominated, the "battlers" (to use an expressive colloquialism), whose life is a continual struggle for some sort of existence, predestined failures—apt, all the same, to see grim humour in things at their worst, and never forgetful of the obligations of mateship. The mines have their minstrel, too, and New Zealand has found a poet native to the soil whose work is of more than local interest. Little of all this, maybe, is of permanent value as literature in the sense of the stylist: but it is genuine, it is observed on the spot, it is an attempt to tell what really happens as men in the bush tell it to each other. For understanding the influences that work among those who will be masters of the new Commonwealth, it is of more value than many histories.

Self-reliant, self-confident — inclined to undervalue the knowledge of others, but always quick to utilize and eager to add to his own—less educated than the Englishman of his own class, but more capable of education, more widely interested in matters outside himself—the Australian knows one supreme virtue, that of comradeship; one fatal vice, that of treachery. It is by these that you appeal to or repel him. Mateship is the bond of individuals to-day—it may be, if we choose, the bond of Empire in the coming years. But if, professing ourselves his comrades, we call him to aid in Imperial work, and then give him cause to suspect we are treating him meanly, or binding him with half-understood technicalities, or by material concealment getting for ourselves a private advantage—then not all the lip-loyalty of seven parliaments will be able to hide his lasting estrangement. It is on this chord that the anti-Imperialist press harps weekly throughout Australasia, calling upon its readers to see in Britain only moneylender and exploiters of other men's chances: and that press

knows its readers well. In this, therefore, lies the key to all colonial statesmanship: if we meet each other as mere business acquaintance on friendly terms, Australia will cheerfully match her wits against ours, without grumbling if we get the better of the bargain; but if we are mates, we must be straight with each other.

* * * * * *

This book must end as it began. Terseness is the quality of a primer: in striving after terseness one is apt to become unconsciously dogmatic. And Australia, more, perhaps, than any other British country, resents dogmatism as impertinence. Its whole history is so recent, and yet so hard to unravel—partly because of the multitude of documents, partly because of the gaps in their series, not all due to negligence; the events that have made it are so intimately bound up with its public and private life to-day; that one feels biassed at every turn by imperfect knowledge, by predilections, by desire to avoid giving offence. The historian, conceiving his work on a larger scale, can set out at length the evidence on which he relies, the qualifications which should be made in most of his general statements—can at least, by a fuller and more personal disclosure of his point of view, put his readers on their guard against his own prejudices. Here there is no room for all that: one can only select such facts and such opinions as seem to be of primary importance and value, and hope for readers who will try for themselves to understand better their kinsmen oversea. They must remember that Australia's history is her worst side: in spite of it, not by virtue of it, she is what her lovers know. It is the land and the men that matter, not the dates and events. And this, that matters, is just what no written words can explain or truly describe —the free air that invigorates life and thought, the bush that one is homesick for, the mates that are the best in all the world.

# NOTE

In writing the history of seven colonies founded at different times for different reasons and sometimes guided by antagonistic policies, one's narrative is apt to lose itself, like too many Australian rivers, among a spread of shallow channels in flat country. I have therefore tried to maintain a central current by adhering more closely to the story of the mother colony, New South Wales; at the same time I have dealt separately with the others wherever their differing careers or policies seemed important enough to justify such treatment. My facts are taken as far as possible from the original authorities—the mass of blue-books which has not yet been half-ransacked by Australian historians, the explorers' own journals, reminiscences and autobiographies of representative men, and many unpublished documents belonging to private collections in Sydney and Melbourne. Such knowledge and opinions as are personal to myself have been acquired during seventeen years' residence and work in the four eastern colonies of the Commonwealth, and by virtue of a fairly wide acquaintance with men of all professions and occupations.

Australian history is so recent that most books dealing with any part of it are at bottom controversial, and their value depends largely on the ease or difficulty with which the reader discerns the writer's point of view and makes allowance for it. Of trustworthy histories in handy form there is a great lack. The following list of books, however, may be useful to students of Australian life.

## *A.*—DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION


Major, R. H. *Early Voyages to Terra Australis.* London, 1859.

Cook, James. *Journal of his first Voyage round the World (ed. by Wharton).* London, 1893.

FLINDERS, M. *A Voyage to Terra Australis.* 2 vols. London, 1814.

STURT, C. *Expeditions into the Interior of Australia.* 2 vols. London, 1833.

MITCHELL, SIR T. L. *Expeditions into the Interior of E. Australia.* 2 vols. London, 1839.

STURT, N. G. *Life of Charles Sturt.* London, 1899.

FAVENC, E. *History of Australian Exploration,* 1788-1888. London, 1888.

Nearly all the explorers published accounts of their own journeyings.

## *B.*—GENERAL HISTORY, ETC.

RUSDEN, G. W. *History of Australia.* 3 vols. London, 1883.

RUSDEN, G. W. *History of New Zealand.* London, 1883. 3 vols., the last especially polemical.

BENNETT, SAMUEL. *History of Australian Discovery and Colonization.* Sydney, 1867.

BONWICK, JAMES. *First Twenty Years of Australia.* London, 1882.

JENKS, F. *History of the Australasian Colonies to* 1893. Cambridge, 1895. Especially valuable on legal matters.

PARKES, SIR H. *Fifty Years in the Making of Australian History.* 2 vols. London, 1892.

MORRIS, E. E. *A Memoir of George Higinbotham.* London, 1895.

REEVES, W. P. *The Long White Cloud, Aotearoa.* London, 1898.

THOMSON, A. S. *The Story of New Zealand.* 2 vols. London, 1859.

WALLACE, A. R. *Australia and New Zealand.* London, 1893.

## C.—POLITICS AND SOCIAL LIFE

BACKHOUSE, J. *Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies.* London, 1843.
MUNDY, G. C. *Our Antipodes.* London, 1857.
CURR, E. M. *Recollections of Squatting in Victoria* (1841-51). Melbourne, 1883.
LLOYD, G. T. *Thirty-three Years in Tasmania and Victoria.* London, 1862.
BOLDREWOOD, R. *Old Melbourne Memories.* London, 1896.
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KINGSLEY, HENRY. *The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn.* London, 1894.
BOLDREWOOD, R. *The Miner's Right.* London, 1891.
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WAKEFIELD, E. G. *View of the Art of Colonization.* London, 1849.
JENKS, E. *The Government of Victoria.* London, 1891.
DILKE, SIR C. W. *Greater Britain.* London, 1885.

## D.—THE NATIVE RACES

FISON, L., and HOWITT, A. W. *Kamilaroi and Kurnai.* Melbourne, 1880.
MATHEW, J. *Eaglehawk and Crow.* London, 1899.
CURR, E. M. *The Australian Race.* 4 vols. London, 1886.
SPENCER, B., and GILLEN, F. J. *The Native Tribes of Central Australia.* London, 1899.
LUMHOLTZ, C. *Among Cannibals.* London, 1889.
ROTH, WALTER. *Ethnological Studies among the N.W. Queensland Aborigines.* Brisbane, 1897.
BONWICK, J. *The Lost Tasmanian Race.* London, 1884.
GREY, Sir G. *Polynesian Mythology and History of the New Zealand Race.* London, 1855.
NICHOLLS, J. H. K. *The King Country.*

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*Where* Sydney, Melbourne, *&c., are used merely as synonyms for* New South Wales, Victoria, *&c., references to them are indexed under the names of the respective colonies.*


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